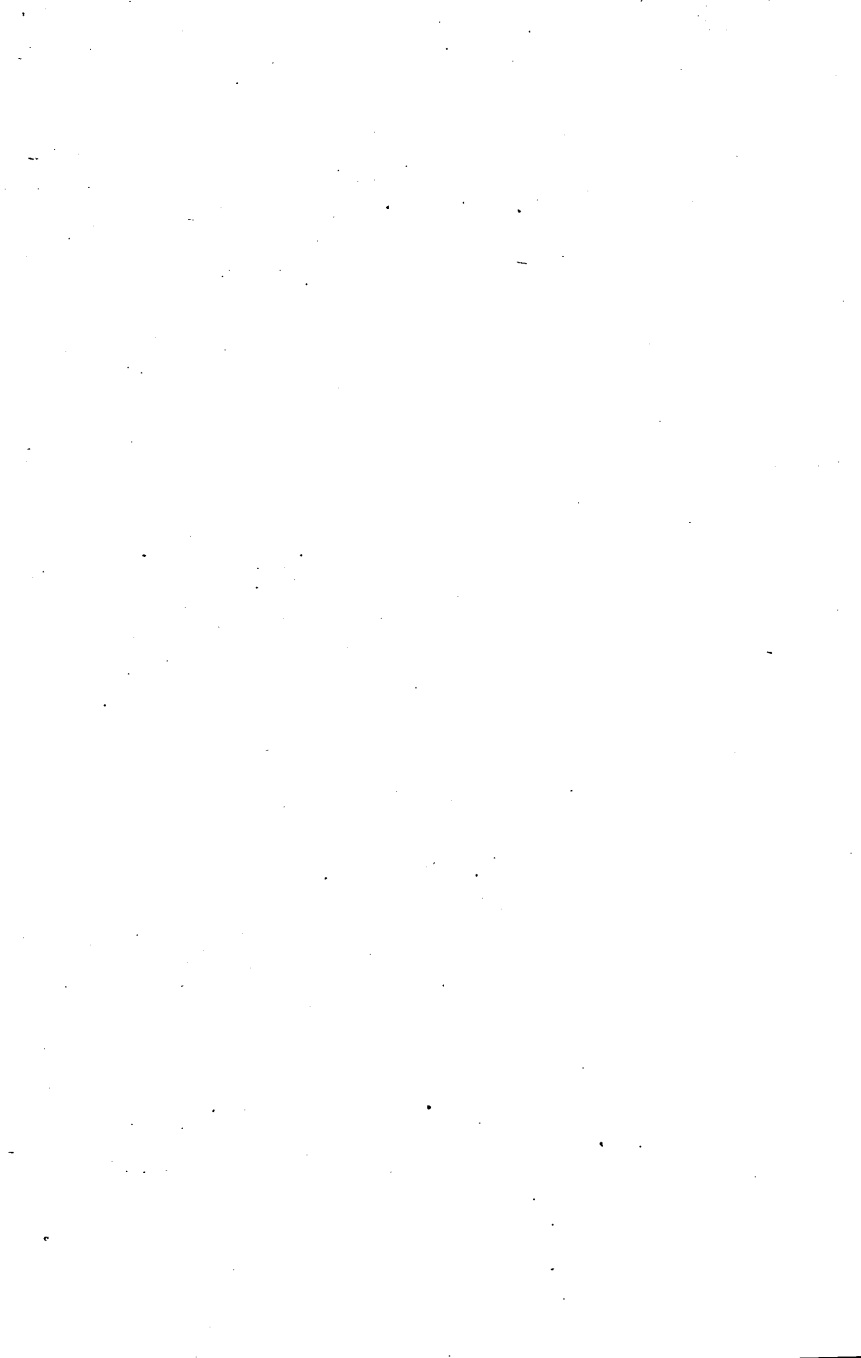
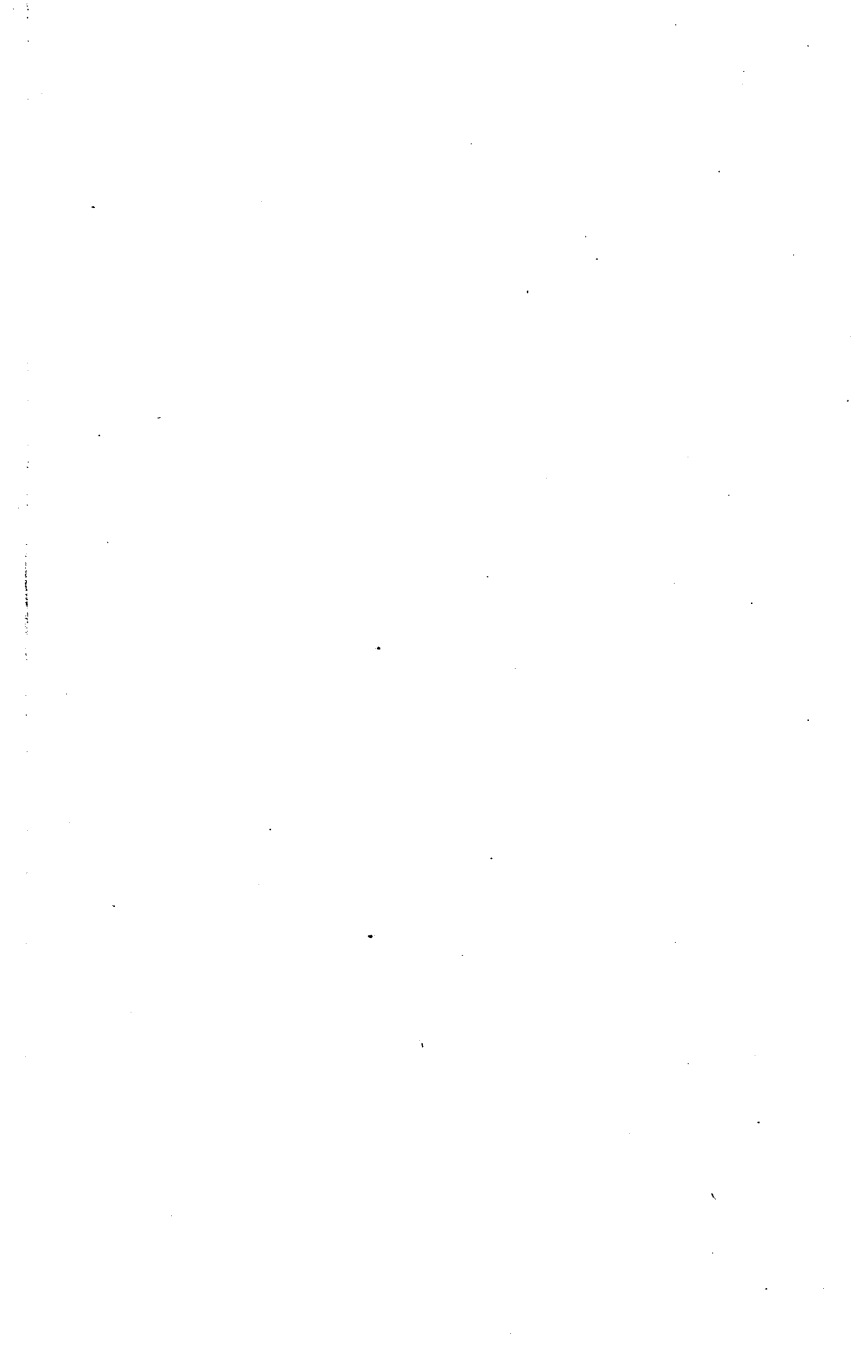


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THE TWENTIETH SERIES OF
CROALL LECTURES

BY

WILLIAM L. DAVIDSON
M.A., LL.D.

PROFESSOR OF LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

AUTHOR OF

"THE LOGIC OF DEFINITION" "THEISM-AS GROUNDED IN HUMAN NATURE"

"THE STOIC CREED" "POLITICAL THOUGHT IN ENGLAND: THE UTILITARIANS
FROM BENTHAM TO J. S. MILL" ETC.

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"The Scripture saith ; *The Foole hath said in his Heart, there is no God* : It is not said ; *The Foole hath thought in his Heart* : So as, he rather saith it by rote to himselfe, as that he would have, then that he can throughly beleeeve it, or be perswaded of it. For none deny there is a *God*, but those, for whom it maketh that there were no *God*."

BACON.

"Practice is the parent of theory and realisation the surest verification."

JAMES WARD.

TO
MY SISTER
MARGARET



PREFACE

THESE Lectures, dealing in large measure with the series of Gifford Lectures up to 1919, may be regarded as a supplement to my Burnett Lectures of 1892 and 1893 on *Theism as grounded in Human Nature*. In the earlier volume the realm of Theism was traversed from the standpoint of psychology and logic, and an effort was made to analyse and appraise leading agnostic theories, as well as to expound the nature and meaning of religious doubt. Considerable space was devoted to the handling of Emotional theism, Ethical theism, and Intellectual theism respectively. Progress since then has been made in various directions, arising from man's constantly widening views of the structure and nature of the universe and from the never-ceasing urgency of the practical needs of a growing experience. Much has been due to the unabating impulse of science and of philosophy (awakened afresh to interest in the problems of religion) in recent years; and the Gifford Lectures may be taken as embodying

the various currents of thought that bear specially on Theistic doctrine within the present generation.

I acknowledge with gratitude the friendly service of Professor R. S. Rait, C.B.E., LL.D., of Glasgow University, Historiographer Royal for Scotland, in reading the proof sheets.

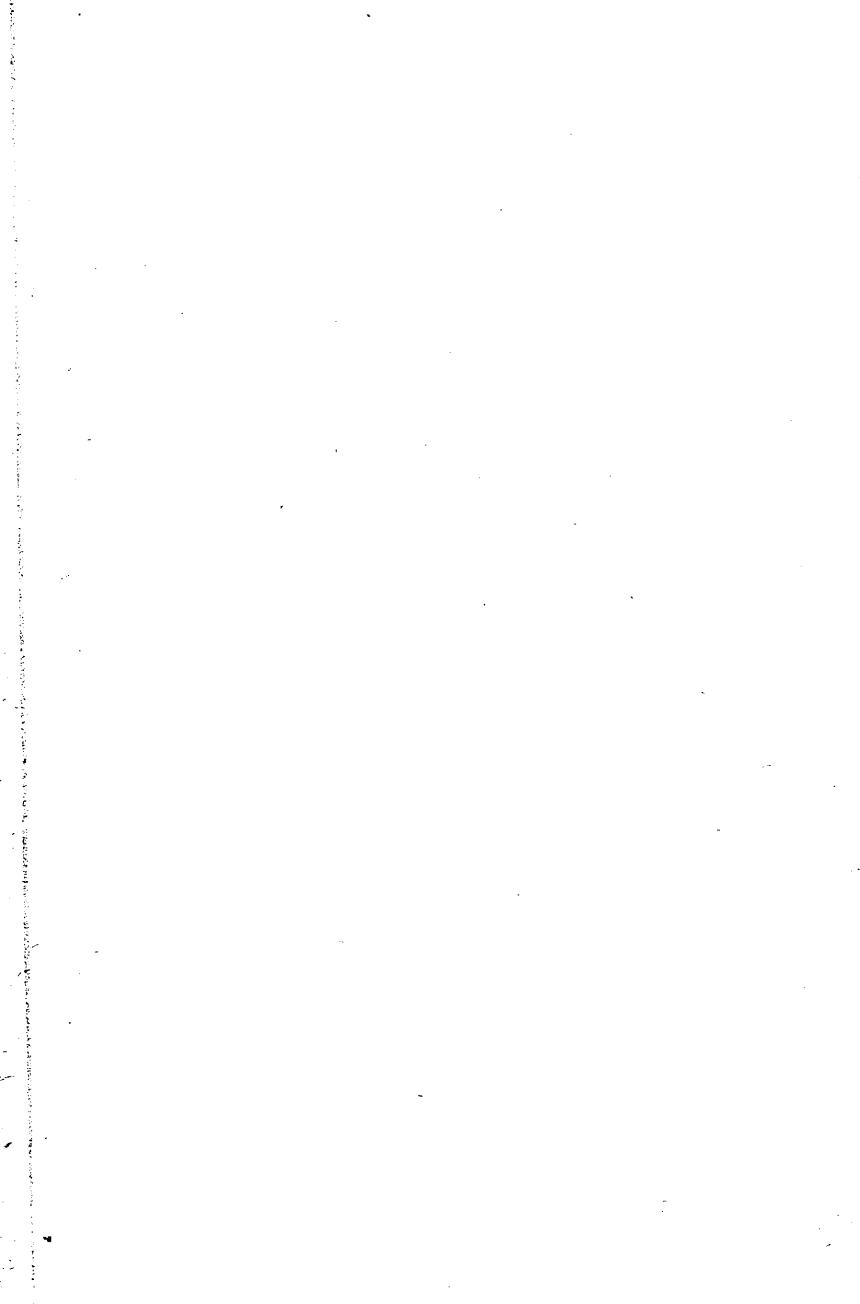
WILLIAM L. DAVIDSON.

THE UNIVERSITY, ABERDEEN,

September 1921.

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Recent Theistic Discussion

LECTURE I

THE CONCEPTS "RELIGION" AND "THEISM"

"We are Thine offspring, alone of mortal things that live and walk the earth, moulded in image of the All."—CLEANTHES.

"And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things."

WORDSWORTH.

"By being religious we establish ourselves in possession of ultimate reality at the only points at which reality is given us to guard. Our responsible concern is with our private destiny, after all."—WILLIAM JAMES.

WHEN the Croall Trustees did me the honour of inviting me to deliver the present Course of Lectures, they also indicated the subject that they desired me to handle. They wished me to state

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what I conceive to be the lines of recent theistic reasoning that are specially important, and to express my opinion of their value, taken directly in connexion with the diverse series of Gifford Lectures delivered before the four Scottish Universities within the last quarter of a century, with critical estimate of a brief selection of those of them that I regard as most germane to the subject of Theism. This has determined both the scope and the character of my lectures. Only a few selected specimens of Gifford Lectures can be passed under review; but I propose (as desired) to give rounded form to my endeavour by adding, in the published volume, an undelivered lecture essaying in brief form some sort of grouping of the Gifford Lectures according to subject-matter, which may serve as a succinct presentment of the vast wealth of philosophical thinking that the munificent Gifford Trust has called forth.

In furtherance of my plan, I begin with a preliminary presentation of the realm of Theism, in the shape of an analysis of the two concepts "Theism" and "Religion."

I

Religion in man derives its origin from the mysterious nature of the world in which he finds himself to be and the ever-pressing experiences

of life. In itself religion does not consist simply in the intellectual apprehension of something other than the individual, overawing and constraining him, but involves also a feeling or set of feelings and emotions towards that something, and a desire and resolve to act towards it in the way that the feelings and the apprehension dictate. The something apprehended may be simply the forces of nature, ever operating for good or for evil on men, but independent of them; or it may be the universe felt or conceived as a unity—an ordered whole; or it may be a supreme Person, gathering up into Himself all powers. But in every aspect of it, it is conceived as something greater than the individual, super-eminent, drawing forth his emotions and demanding his loyalty and active obedience.

This holds markedly of religion among the higher or advanced races of mankind, but also (confusedly, no doubt, and haltingly) of religion among the lower races, who, although imagining the controlling power or powers erroneously so far as concerns propitiation and the modes of religious ceremonial and ritual, are nevertheless groping their way towards satisfaction in something other and higher than themselves, whose favourable regard brings peace, invigorates life, and stimulates to action. The conception of the

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object of devotion may not at first be exalted, it may be grossly anthropomorphic; but it answers to a real human want, and, at the particular level of development, appeases inward anxiety and unrest. Nothing more, *so far as the result is concerned*, is found in the more developed and cultured races. The difference lies in the quality of the need and the appreciation of values. The object of devotion is differently conceived, and with that the kind of satisfaction is altered, becoming ultimately full self-surrender to and ethical fellowship with a Being so high that the worshipper can never sufficiently extol Him, whose favour is felt to be "better than life." But, in either case, intellect, feeling, and will, all enter into it, and none of these elements can be dispensed with.

But, although this is the formal analysis and abstract characterization of religion, in point of fact (as we find in history and in actual personal experience) different individuals do show a distinct diversity in the way in which the religious elements are mixed in them, and the modes in which they find expression. No religious person is without some idea of the nature of the object of his devotion; but some carry their feeling towards the object into mysticism, while others emphasize the intellectual concept and subordinate

the emotions to formal dialectic and crystallized dogma, and still others lay the stress on action or the reference to daily conduct. The ground of this is, doubtless, in large part individual temperament; for, explain it how we may, there is a constitutional difference in individuals, and the fact is very significant when we are dealing with religious types.¹ Still, take any type you care, the type signifies only predominance of one or other of the religious factors, but does not (except in extreme mysticism) imply the actual destruction or annihilation of any.

Religion essentially involves the conception of an object of *worship*. “Greater,” at every stage of religious development, means “worth” (as the very derivation of the term worship — *worth-ship* — indicates). The test of worth, at the lowest stages, is obviously man’s own interest or imagined welfare. A deity has worth in so far as he possesses extraordinary power and can make an effective use of it; and gaining his favour becomes the supreme object of the individual’s efforts. Real affection need not be implied, but only obsequiousness, or, at best, admiration shown in formal or ceremonial submission and dictated by the worshipper’s self-interest.

¹ For a full handling of religious types see William James’s Gifford Lectures, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*.

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At higher stages, worth, of course, assumes a nobler and purer form and worship is refined accordingly. The conception changes with the elevation of the individual's own character and moral nature, and with the advance in social and moral development and the progress of thought and intellectual attainment. Change in man's mental outlook, through deepened experience of life—moral, mental, and spiritual—involves a corresponding change in his conception of the nature of the object in religious devotion. In brief, when the pure ethical ideal enters, it fires the imagination and touches the heart; and worship becomes, in the highest degree, an act of affection and adoration involving pure and lofty aspirations, self-dedication, and gratification of the inmost longings for the good. It is then that the living flame mounts upwards; and *sursum corda* arises spontaneously to the lips.

The leading functions and characteristics of religion thus become apparent. First of all, heart and mind are both involved in it, and religion brings to the individual *inward satisfaction*—not merely pleasure and absence of pain, but abiding peace and joy, accompanied with a conviction of security, arising from the consciousness of being in harmony with the great Power (or Powers) of the universe. This is seen even in the lower religions, when the

deity is imagined as essentially malignant; for, though malignant, he is always regarded as one who may be placated, and placating brings the individual peace. It is seen also in Pantheism; for the pantheist rests peacefully in contemplation of the whole; even when, in presence of the mysterious universe, he can only exclaim, with Renan, “O Great Being, O Great Being!” he is thereby testifying to his feeling of awe and his own contentedness. It was the highest aim of Spinoza to reach, through Intuition, the “intellectual love of God,” which, being part of “the infinite love with which God loves Himself,” is necessarily all-sufficing, and the source of blessedness.¹ This is the inner nature of the religious experience—a sense of being at one with the Highest and consequent joy and bliss, even in the midst of “a divine discount.” Such experience, in its higher forms, is sensitive to everything that disturbs the harmony. Hence the meaning to the religious man of conscience—of conviction of sin and sorrow for it, of self-humiliation, and of the cry for conversion. But, in these higher forms, it is not the idea of placating God that is operative, but that of union and intimate communion with Him.

I would here emphasize the sense of *security* that is involved in inward satisfaction; for this gives

¹ *Ethica*, Pars. v., props. 33, 35, 36, and 42.

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us the essence of the commanding religious emotion Awe, and marks it off from the emotion of Fear, with which it is so frequently but erroneously identified. The two are, at vital points, diametrically opposed. Fear repels and does not attract, and its nature is not to encourage, but to agitate and unsettle us—debilitating the body and paralyzing both the activity of the intellect (so that, in extreme fear, we lose the ability of clearly planning or conceiving a mode of escape) and the working of the will (so that we cannot effect our escape by active movement). Fear results from a sense of danger or impending evil; the object that arouses it is regarded as essentially hostile to us. But, in Awe, the characteristics are exactly the opposite. We are now in the conscious presence of the beneficent Sublime—of superior Power that does not threaten us, but is felt to be friendly to us, and in whose grasp we feel ourselves secure. It attracts us, therefore, draws us to itself, instead of repelling us; and as it inspires in us trust, not fear, we submit ourselves to its influence and are at peace. Hence the ennobling and uplifting character of this emotion. It raises us to what is greater, higher, grander, better than ourselves—to what is superior to us in majesty or in might, to the Supreme Source of all that we conceive as having worth, but whose superiority and greatness are felt

to be the complement, and not the contradictory, of ourselves. It arouses in us longing for itself, even while we are conscious of our own imperfection and unworthiness. Is it any wonder then that Awe, with its concomitants of Reverence and Veneration, should be of the essence of religion and should lie at the very root of worship?¹

In the next place, the religious individual is one who has awaked, in a very real way, to consciousness of the *seriousness* and deeper significance of life and of his own work and responsibility as a living human being. The universe in which he has his home is felt to be an awe-inspiring universe, and mystery lies at the centre of it. There is mystery to him in his own existence; there is mystery in the existence of an external material world; there is, above all, mystery in the problems of physical suffering and moral evil, and he cannot but be serious if he is reflective. But he feels that he is placed here for a purpose. Life means something to him and for him, and he is resolved to make the best of it. And so, constrained by the conception of God, he cannot take a hopelessly gloomy view of the world. Religion makes him an optimist; confidence in the Supreme upholds him and prevents despair. Besides imparting

¹ See my article “Awe” in Hastings’ *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. ii.

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courage and bracing him to face the hardships of life, it carries along with it all the stalwart virtues—patience, endurance, self-sacrifice, and the like. Instead of “optimist,” many would say “meliorist”; but, although the distinction between optimism and meliorism is one very proper to be made when we are trying to compute the worth of life from the standpoint of our sentient experiences (pleasure and pain), meliorism is necessarily taken up into optimism whenever we introduce the ideal into our conception of the world, and look upon the world as *God's* world. Evils, imperfections, defects are then seen to be but temporary, and the ideal is working itself out. From this point of view, “a finite deity” seems a contradiction in terms.

Moreover, it must be ever borne in mind that religion as experienced is a sense or consciousness of the constant presence of the Divine, and a religious life is one spent in such consciousness. Hence, the supreme object of reverence and devotion becomes to us more and other than a far-off inscrutable Power. He is God enshrined in our heart, felt to be an ever-present Reality, caring for us and acquainted with all our ways; and through this consciousness when fully established fear and anxiety as to what may happen to us are dispelled, and the calm and serenity of assured confidence take their place.

“Religion” and “Theism” 11

Last of all, as religion touches what is deepest in man's nature, it tends naturally to be all-pervasive in its influence. Not only does it aim at directing the life of the individual, penetrating into its very core and directing all its energies, but it underlies social life and institutions, binding together members of a community and opposing all that is anti-social and disruptive. Its function as a unifier of humanity is of vast importance, making common duties sacred and thereby giving stability to law and order. Civil obligation and social cohesion are then most secure when they are based on religious sanction.

II

Unity and community with the Supreme, then, with the ensuing peace and satisfaction, and the spirit of reverence and willing self-surrender, issuing in worship and devotion, and animating daily life or conduct, constitute the essence of religion. Let us see now the working of this in fact by a brief reference to a few typical forms of religion that human history discloses.

Polytheism bears testimony to the consciousness of man's impotence when in opposition to the forces of nature, and his desire to be at one with that which is strongest and most helpful in nature. It is an effort at adjusting oneself to the actual,

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accepting the inevitable and bending the contingent to one's interests. It recognizes both harmony and conflict in the world, and the realization of harmony through conflict. And hence, while it acknowledges "gods many, and lords many," it devises a hierarchy of deities, with one supreme; thereby endeavouring to satisfy the human craving for unity, while recognizing the diversities and contrasts that experience of nature and of natural events soon discloses. Nature's uniformity, in so far as discovered, means unity of purpose among the gods: its variety and conflicts point to divergency of counsel and of will. Human *conclaves* or *assemblies* are here obviously taken as the model. Thus are the whole known facts of natural experience taken account of, if not actually explained. The good and the evil of life, the pleasures and the pains, the bitter and the sweet, the harmonious and the discordant, the harsh and the gentle—all find a place, and nothing seems left out or suppressed. There is no solution of the problem, of course, but there is a preparation for one. There is the human soul bringing itself into conscious reflective contact with the problem; not least is there the awakening to the fact that the solution lies in the apprehension of plurality in unity—unity of the gods, inasmuch as there is one deity supreme; but unity also between the

gods and man, for, though there may be conflict at times between the individual human being and the deities that he acknowledges, his peace (it is discovered) lies in unison with the higher powers and with their plans. *Their* purpose and *his* purpose must be harmonized. Hence, there is one great merit in polytheism: this, namely, that, as it conceives the world to be full of gods, it thereby expresses its adherence to the fundamental truth that the divine is everywhere present and may be ever felt to be within us and around us.

When polytheism is outgrown and thought becomes deeper, the feeling of unity becomes intenser. “The all” now absorbs the attention, and the constituent elements retire into the background. This is the solution offered by pantheism—which either makes the concrete whole of things (Nature or the World) the object of pious regard, thereby identifying God with the world, so that pantheism becomes “pancosmism” or strips the world altogether of reality, and looks on the facts of experience as merely appearances and illusions, thus becoming “acosmic” pantheism, which ends in making ultimate reality the object of mystical feeling and reduces it to the unknown and unknowable. Either way, on the subjective side the individual tries to find peace in the consciousness or feeling of absolute unity, and, in extreme

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pantheism, endeavours to lose his own individuality therein.

The post-Socratic philosophy of ancient Greece may be taken to illustrate the working of pantheism in various phases of it. In the Schools of Greek philosophy, pantheism stood forth conspicuous on its religious side in the teaching of the Stoics (a rare blending of materialism and spiritualism)—where the deity is conceived as primitive all-pervasive fire, permeated by *logos* or reason (thus securing the unity of the universe), and the soul of man is conceived as a spark from this divine fire or as a seed of reason¹ (thus securing man's capacity for response to the deity), while Nature itself is viewed, with the strictness of the man of science of the present day, as an ordered system, obeying definite laws, subject rigorously to *logos*, which secures measure and rhythm to natural processes, with Fate supreme (yet compatible with Providence), and moving inexorably in recurring cycles. The religious aspect of it lies in the fact that the Stoic realized the true character of the world-course (a course rationally ordered and ethically conditioned), saw that everything that happens must be for the best, and submitted himself, therefore, unreservedly to all life's experience and to death itself as being but a necessary

¹ λόγος σπερματικός.

factor in the world process, and accepted as his ideal the “life agreeably to nature.” He *trusted* the world-order, and refused to repine at pain and hardships and seemingly adverse circumstances. The Stoic, consequently, though stern and unbending on the side of his being turned towards the tender emotions and the amiable virtues, was essentially heroic and manly in face of life’s trials and its demands for the crucifying of self, and he viewed the world optimistically. Nothing finer in the religious spirit of it (the spirit of reverence, and of chastened optimism, and of willing submission to the Supreme), and in the grand impressive march of elevated thought, intense with heartfelt conviction, can be found than the *Hymn to Zeus* of Cleanthes :

“Above all gods most glorious, invoked by many a name, almighty evermore, who didst found the world and guided all by law—O Zeus, hail, for it is right that all mortals address thee. We are thine offspring, alone of mortal things that live and walk the earth, moulded in image of the All: therefore, thee will I hymn and sing thy praise continually. . . . Thee doth all this system that rolls round the earth obey in what path soever thou guidest it, and willingly is it governed by thee. . . . Nay, more, what is uneven, thy skill doth make even; what knew not order, it setteth in order; and things that strive find all in thee a friend. For

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thus hast thou fitted all, evil with good, in one great whole, so that in all things reigns one reason everlastingly Without thee, O Divinity, no deed is done on earth, nor in the ethereal vault divine, nor in the deep, save only what wicked men do in the folly of their hearts."¹

This fine religious spirit further breathes in those beautiful lines of Cleanthes preserved to us by Epictetus:² "Lead me, O Zeus, and thou, O Destiny, whithersoever I am ordained by you to go. I will follow without hesitation. And even if, in evil mood, I would not, none the less must I follow."

We should reach the same result if we turned to Plato and the Platonic teaching. "Likeness to God" is, according to Plato, the great end and aim of man's existence; and, however elusive the idea of God may at times be in Plato, he does not leave us in doubt as to what this likeness consists in. In a well-known passage of the *Theaetetus*, he counsels us, in order to get rid of evil, "to fly away from earth to heaven as quickly as we can," and "to fly away," he says, "is to become like God, as far as this is possible; and to become like Him, is to become holy, just, and wise. God is never in any way unrighteous—He is perfect righteousness;

¹ See my *Stoic Creed*, p. 235: also my article on "Cleanthes" in Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. iii.

² See *Encheiridion*, lii.

and he of us who is the most righteous is most like Him.” This strikes the key-note of the higher Hellenic thinking. It lays the stress on character, and makes the ethical life supreme. God is absolute purity, and wisdom, and righteousness or justice; and these should be the dominating qualities in man too. Moreover, in the *Timaeus*, the Good is represented as gathered up in God, and God is shown us as the Creator of the world, and therefore of man, acting from a purely ethical and unselfish motive: “He was good, and the good can never have any jealousy of anything. And being free from jealousy He devised that all things should be as like Himself as they could be.” Goodness is the motive, then, and teleology or purpose the explanation of the world.

Now, how, according to Plato, is the Divine likeness to be contracted by man? By “following” and by “imitating” God. These two processes, no doubt, are aspects of one and the same thing, but they are not synonymous.

To “follow” God (if we develop the metaphor) is to take Him as our guide or leader and to accompany Him, to submit ourselves to His will and counsel, to accept His wisdom and to act upon it. It designates companionship and obedience, surrendering ourselves to His influence in a very

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personal way, looking chiefly to acceptance of His law. It is very much what the Psalmist in the Old Testament ascribes to the "blessed" man, whose "delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night" (Ps. i.). Thus does the soul find satisfaction. The Stoic Marcus Aurelius varies the phrase by another striking one, "*Walk with God*"—and, "walking with God" he conjoins with "love to mankind," just as though he were a modern Christian reproducing New Testament teaching. "Be your brightness," he says, "that of simplicity and self-respect, and of indifference to all that is not virtue or vice. Love mankind. Walk with God."¹

On the other hand, to "imitate" God (interpreting the second metaphor) introduces the idea of deliberately setting God before us as our pattern, as the artist (sculptor or painter) does his model, so that he may, as far as possible, "copy" Him. The result of such imitation is that we are by degrees transformed into His likeness, and reproduce in our measure His characteristics. Yet it is "by degrees": the formed product needs energy, care, and time for its accomplishment. How far this means a regaining of a pristine position, such as the individual had in a pre-existent state but lost (according to metempsychosis) by his descent

¹ *Med.* vii. 31 (ἀκολουθήσον Θεῷ).

at birth to union with an earthly body, Pythagoras and Plato alone can say.

All this refers mainly to the *ethical* side of likeness to God. But there is another side—the *intellectual* or *contemplative*. This, though expressed in the Platonic theory of Ideas, is best brought out, perhaps, in the teaching of Aristotle. Thought or contemplation, according to Aristotle, is the great feature of the life of God—contemplation for its own sake, not for any ulterior object; and in contemplation also man’s highest life consists. “As it is the reason that in the truest sense is the man, the life that consists in the exercise of reason is the best and pleasantest for man—and, therefore, the happiest.”¹ Sharing thus in pure contemplation, man shares in the thought that is an end in itself, complete, and self-sufficient, and so is independent of everything external: “happiness extends just so far as contemplation, and the more contemplation the more happiness is there in life—not accidentally, but as a necessary accompaniment of the contemplation; for contemplation is precious in itself.”² God, to Aristotle, is “thinking upon thought.”³ But a God all contemplation, it ought to be observed, is a non-ethical God, having no interest in finite creatures and

¹ *Eth. Nic.* x. vii. 9.

² *Id.* x. viii. 8.

³ *Metaphysics*, xii. 9–1074b, 30.

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their aspirations, and not in any way reciprocating their affection, or acknowledging their homage.

But not yet is the sketch complete. There is still a phase of Greek thought (the culmination of pantheism) to be noted—that of the philosophical mystic. This is strikingly exemplified by Neo-platonism, where God is viewed as the Absolute—the undifferented and indeterminate One, beyond human thought and human will and even beyond “being,” the ineffable and the inexplicable. And yet the cravings of the human heart are so strong and so insistent that the Neo-platonist could not rest in this bare abstract conception, but proceeded to evolve it by his famous theory of Emanations; and personally his own great end and effort were, by means of non-rational “ecstasy,” as the result of a strict ascetic discipline, to get away from the limitations of finitude and sense, from the body, which he viewed not only as the sepulchre of the soul but as contaminating and degrading (the seat and source of evil), and to lose himself in the Absolute, through a communion which was also an absorption. Complete Immediacy, in which distinctions are not, where consciousness and thought are quenched, is what he aimed at, and the test of its attainment was entire satisfaction to his soul and perfect peace. It is effected by “ecstasy,” and ecstasy (so Porphyry tells us) is reached “by the

suspension of all the intellectual faculties, by repose and the annihilation of thought. As the soul learns to know sleep when slumbering, so it is in ecstasy, or the annihilation of all the faculties of her being, that she knows that which is above existence and above truth” (*Sent.* Art. 26).

A parallel to all this may very readily be found in Hindoo mysticism as set forth in the Upanishads, with their keen dialectical procedure and fascinating paradoxes, down to the very instance of dreamless sleep accepted as the best figure to express “the true relation of the illusory finite to the true Absolute.”¹

Thus far can Greek thought carry us. The spirit of it all along is pantheistic, although the theology of Aristotle is nearer Theism on its intellectual side than Pantheism, yet is susceptible of a pantheistic rendering, as we see, for instance, in Averroës’ interpretation of it. But, in the Stoic writings and in the Platonic Dialogues, there is a personifying of the Divine and a glowing play of the imagination so vivid that it carries us over many difficulties; and, in later Stoicism (in Epictetus and Seneca in particular, following the example of Cleanthes), the conception of personality as

¹ The nature of Hindoo mysticism has been vividly brought out by Josiah Royce, in his Gifford Lectures at Aberdeen, on *The World and the Individual*, 1st Series, Lec. iv.

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applied to the Deity is very pronounced ; and such terms as " Father," " Guardian," " Friend," are freely applied to Him. In this, Hellenism, through an unconscious trend, was approaching Hebraism.

III

It might appear that pantheism affords the natural logical transition to Theism. And so it would if Cleanthes and Epictetus and Plato were our sole type of pantheists ; in their hands, immanence and transcendence meet in the Divine. Their religious fervour led them to personify the universe and to gather up all power and influence in a *personalized* being—God (God as the Good, the source and ground both of knowing and of being, according to the Platonic Theory of Ideas ; or Zeus, according to the Stoic terminology). This served to steady their thought and to fan their affection. But, as we see in Neo-platonism, and as Indian mysticism clearly shows, the real tendency of pantheism is to overturn thought, to make immediate feeling everything, and to overlook or disown vital and absolutely indispensable intellectual distinctions. Moreover, as we find in the history of Indian thought, pantheism can as readily ally itself with polytheism as with Theism.¹

¹ See art. " Pantheism (Hindu)," Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. ix.

And so the transition taken logically is really through polytheism, or rather through that form of it known as Henotheism. The gods of polytheism are persons. Consequently, whenever the indefinite number of gods is formed into a hierarchy and one is regarded as supreme over all (as Zeus ruled among the Olympians), or whenever, out of the indefinite number, one is selected by a tribe or a nation as its special protecting deity, the way is clearly prepared for Theism or (which is practically the same thing) Monotheism. For, personality lies at the root of Theism. Both the human intellect and the human heart demand this; and it is demanded by our ethical nature (for ethics strictly speaking exists only as between *persons*). Cleanthes caught it in his own imposing manner when (in words already quoted) he said, “We are thine offspring, alone of mortal things that live and walk the earth, moulded in image of the All; therefore, thee will I hymn and sing thy praise continually.” That was his way (the true Stoic way) of saying what Scripture declares when it so grandly and impressively enunciates, “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

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And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.”¹

But God, the Creator or Authōr of our being, is personal, the Person of persons, and so is not a God afar off, but very nigh to us. This theistic implication, if not necessitated by, is elucidated and borne home upon us by modern science and philosophy. The scientific conception of Evolution is essentially that of *immanence*—the *immanence* of the Power or Force in nature that underlies all things; and the world, to the man of science, is not static but dynamic—not a “block system” but an evolving process. The philosopher, in like manner, is no less arrested by the process of *becoming* or development revealed in conscious experience, and regards it as his chief problem. To both scientist and philosopher the day of the deist is past: the notion of a deity that is only transcendent and static, is ineffective. This prominence given to the idea of immanence has widened the view of the theist. Formerly, it was regarded as sufficient to define Theism as the doctrine and conception of God as The Supreme Power, the Omnipotent Creator, the Omniscient Lawgiver, and Judge, the Ruler of the Universe, the inscrutable operative cause in the events of

¹ Gen. i. 26-27.

Providence; or recourse was had to logical and unimpassioned phraseology, designative of pure Being. The famous definition of the Westminster Divines may be taken as an example: “God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth.”¹ This is impressive in its stateliness and austerity, but it is purely abstract and metaphysical and devoid of emotion. Recent theistic thought, following human experience more closely, without denying the truth embodied in the older presentation, demands a warmer and fuller content. It insists on regarding the God with whom we have to do as no distant unapproachable Being, to be feared rather than loved, nor as a mere Spiritual Substance, in which Attributes are inherent, but as the living God—attentive to our cry, appreciative of our loyalty, gracious to our weaknesses, redemptive of our sins, entering into and sharing our sufferings and joys, helpful of us in our strivings, rejoicing when we do well, grieving when we do ill. The cause of the change is the greater and more intense appreciation of the fact that God is not far away and aloof, nor is He a mere vague presence in the world, related somehow to mankind in general, but a personal Will, a personal Intelligence,

¹ *The Shorter Catechism*, Quest. 4. It is more fully elaborated in *The Larger Catechism*, Quest. 7.

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a personal Love in immediate manifold relation-ship to the individual and adequate to his every need. Philosophy is thus following in the wake of Christian teaching.

IV

The form of Theism that specially appeals to myself, which I have advocated previously and which I advocate now, is *Theism based in human nature and all the parts of it*. Time was when thinkers were satisfied with the Scholastic definition of man as "the rational animal" (taking "rational" as synonymous with "intellectual"), and, in consequence, reason was regarded as paramount and the rest of man's nature was of little or no account in determining the conception of the Highest Being. The God thus reached was cold enough and abstract enough, and little satisfying to the yearning and aspiring soul. But modern philosophy, affected in part by biology, has worked the fruitful notion of the mind as an organic unity, and, consequently, has insisted on the fact that intellect or reason does not stand alone, nor does it work alone, but is in the most intimate relation with feeling and willing, that the fundamental processes of the mind are interrelated or mutually implicated. We are now done with the idea that the mind is a substance divided into

sharply differentiated and mutually exclusive compartments; it is a living unity, whose processes are dependent each on the other.

That being so, the theistic argument laid in man's nature is, that human nature in its entirety postulates God. Man's intellect, dealing with the systematic interpretation of the universe, demands Him as the ultimate explanatory term: He is the supreme unity in which alone the human mind can rest. Man's æsthetic craving, the great human sentiments and emotions, more especially the Beautiful and the Sublime, demand Him. He is the source and fountain of beauty and majesty and grandeur, therefore of the deep religious emotions of adoration and reverence. He is demanded also by man's will and desires; and the sense of dependence and the august requirements of the conscience open the heart and cry aloud for Him, prompting to self-surrender and willing, trustful obedience. In Him we find the Divine realization of all that in us is highest and best, and the fulfilment of our deepest purposes, aspirations, and longings. At every point, man's nature, working in its “solid integrity,” makes itself felt. We are here at the very centre of our being: “heart and flesh cry out for God, for the living God.”

These are the facts on which theistic thinking must, in my opinion, build; and they must be

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taken whole and entire, if at all. As it is the experiences of life that determine the problem set to us, it is these experiences that condition the solution; and they must not be taken in arbitrary selections. For, none of the three sources of revelation to which I have just referred is superior in worth to the other, but all are of co-ordinate value; and feeling, intellect, and will constitute an organic unity, determining the great natural spiritual want, to which God is the response and satisfaction. Hence, the man of science, not least the biologist (dealing with Life in all its grades), can supply material helpful towards a theistic interpretation of existence. The great poets (Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, Wordsworth) can aid, working through contemplation and the creative imagination, ministering to the emotional side of our being, but also, through their unique insight or intuition, bodying forth truth that either has been hid from others or has fallen on us dead because of its being uttered in dull, obscure fashion or in uninspired diction. The prophet and the apostle (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, St. John, and St. Paul) can help, for ethical or spiritual intuition, penetrating the depths is of necessity clearest in them; they are inspired on the side of character and have vision of the supreme holiness—"blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

But philosophy is of singular importance, if the philosopher in his speculations takes care to keep in constant contact with the facts of experience and to avoid being misled into raising the intellect to an exclusive position of worth and superiority, ignoring, or (it may be) overbearing, emotion and striving. I do not suppose that people in general are averse to philosophical thinking—I know it is quite otherwise; but they resent arrogance and unrestricted dogmatism and lopsidedness, and to them a religious dogma is prone to appear simply as “a metaphor frozen stiff.”

My position, then, is, that *God is a necessity of human nature*; which means, not only that in Him this natural spiritual want finds satisfaction (which is something), but, further, that it never could have arisen apart from Him as objectively existent. In other words, the existence of the Object as real is implied in the actual existence of the want. Just as in the case of hunger, on the lower or animal side of our nature, hunger as a want obviously could not originate save in a living organism whose very existence depends on its being nourished by food and, therefore, presupposes the real existence of its object food, so, on the higher or spiritual side of our being, the actual fact of our need of God, laid deep in the

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human constitution, implies that God *is*, as both originating and as satisfying it.¹

If God is thus a primary datum of our nature, it is obvious that His existence cannot in any proper sense of the term be *proved*. It lies at the root of things: it is a postulate, necessary for the explanation of the universe, but not itself explained by being brought under anything higher or more fundamental than itself—nothing higher or more fundamental is possible. In saying this, however, I should not like to be understood as superciliously setting aside the three old-fashioned theistic “proofs,” with their imposing names—ontological, cosmological, and teleological. They have their use, these venerable friends; but it is not that of a logical proof of the Divine existence. They are all attempts (each in its own way) to fill in with content and make definite to ourselves the conception of God, *whose existence is already supposed*. To argue, with Descartes, from the fact that, because I, the individual, who am finite and imperfect, have in my mind the idea of an Infinite and Perfect Being, therefore God, as the Perfect and Infinite Being, exists is not convincing as mere reasoning—the argument may be pulled to pieces by the logician; but it may be taken as a

¹ See for the full working out of this my *Theism as grounded in Human Nature*, Lec. v.

philosopher's endeavour to express in a formal way the *meaning* of the concept of God—an attempt to make clearer what God is (the Perfect and the Infinite), once we have assumed His existence, and then it has a definite value and significance. Again, the cosmological argument, inferring from the world as an effect to God as its “eminent” cause, may not in itself be strictly logical, but it is helpful if regarded as a way of expressing the Divine *transcendence*—God *greater than* the world which He has created. And the teleological argument, reasoning from marks of design in the universe to God as the ultimate Designer, gives a significant view if looked on as an effort to formulate His *immanence* or permeating effective presence. They are useful these so-called “proofs,” then, not as proofs, but as helps towards the steadying of our thoughts on God and as giving a concreteness to Him which shall inspire our faith and direct our conduct.

So, then, God's existence is laid for us in human nature; but not His existence alone—His qualities and character as well. The nature that postulates God also helps us to answer the question, What kind of being is God? Whatever else He may be, and however far we may be from exhausting His being, He is just as we find Him, responsive to our needs and nature; and to that extent we can know

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and love and serve Him, and in Him can find our deepest satisfaction and our rest. It is conscious-spiritual needs, native to our constitution and ineradicable, and their satisfaction, that determine both the definition and the content of Theism.¹

¹ If God *is*, we should be capable (to some extent) of knowing Him. This was pointedly, though somewhat bluntly, expressed by a distinguished man of science (Thomas Clark, Professor of Chemistry in Marischal College, Aberdeen), in the first half of last century, when he said: "If there is a God, we ought to be able to discover something about His habits."

LECTURE II

BIOLOGY AN AID TO THEISM: PROFESSOR HANS DRIESCH

"We are related to God through our consciousness of our fellows. And our fellows, in the end, prove to be far more various than the mere men. It is one office of philosophy to cultivate this deeper sense of companionship with the world. And precisely in this sense of deeper comradeship with nature will lie the future reconciliation of religion and science."

JOSIAH ROYCE.

"Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies ;—
Hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is."

TENNYSON.

THE answer to the question "What is Life?" has been found to be no less troublesome to the biologist than the answer to the analogous question "What is Truth?" has proved to be to the theologian and the metaphysician. The reason in either case is the same. We are dealing here with the ultimate in experience,

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which is its own testimony to the fact experienced and to the nature of it. Consequently, any definition of life, if set forth as strictly logical, must needs be inadequate. But that does not forbid that we shall define it by enumeration of characteristics, ascertained by observation and study of living beings—a method that is perfectly satisfactory, if the characteristics be really distinctive and the enumeration at least approximately exhaustive.

This fact recent biologists have clearly perceived; and what they have set themselves to do, is to lay hold of the characteristics manifested by living matter, and to bring them into comparison with the characteristics of non-living matter or the inorganic, so as to determine the relations of the one to the other and to point the contrast. In doing so, they have placed in the forefront the fact of the autonomy and peculiar activity of life—the power that an organism possesses of remaining whole and entire, of remaining “itself,” in the midst of continual change. This introduces us to such processes as growth (no mere increase in size or bulk by accretion as in a stone, but increase and greater fulness of being by nutrition through assimilation by means of a principle internal to the organism itself), reproduction, development, and, above all, “effective behaviour, registration of

experience, and variability.”¹ Spontaneous movement and purposive selection belong to life.

The scientific study of life may be carried back to Aristotle, whose natural history treatises (*Historia Animalium*, *de Generatione Animalium*, and others) are so many efforts by a great intellect, fully in sympathy with the subject, and thoroughly equipped for his time in science no less than in philosophy, at describing, explaining, and systematizing living beings and living processes; and whose famous analysis or definition of the soul in *de Anima*² is just the bold attempt to find a comprehensive formula of life, which shall be inclusive of plants as well as animals, and the penetrating enunciation of the fact that life is explicable only if taken teleologically, if viewed as activity directed to an end. But biology, as a science, comes much later. It took shape about the middle of the nineteenth century; and the philosophical handling of it, connected with the classification of the sciences, is associated with such names as Auguste Comte in France and Herbert Spencer and Alexander Bain among

¹ See Professor J. Arthur Thomson, in Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. viii. pp. 1-8. See also Dr. James Johnstone's formal description of the organism in his *Philosophy of Biology*, pp. 331-341.

² “The soul is the first Entelechy (realization) of a natural (organized) body, possessing life potentially.”

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ourselves. The most recent advances in connexion with biology have been due in large measure to the eager and patient pursuit of experimental embryology. The result has been remarkable. For one thing, the biologist is now no longer merely intellectually inquisitive, or "soul hydroptic with a thirst for learning," in his investigations, but has come to realize the solidarity of living beings, and so is drawn towards the objects studied by a personal interest as toward beings akin to himself,¹ whose nature (he feels) can be penetrated, in part at least, by the sympathetic imagination, which adds intuition to observation and discursive reason. This, of course, is not to remove his investigations from the region of science to poetry, but, on the contrary, is to render them fully adequate to the expression of what is observed and discovered and to the interpretation of it. It is a commonplace in religion that the pondering gaze of reverence sees farthest into the mysteries of God. So, the sympathetic soul, attuned to what it studies, sees farthest into the nature and meaning of animate

¹ William James reminds us, "There's something wrong with your laboratory-biologist who has no sympathy with living animals" (*Memoirs and Studies*, p. 169).

What I mean is fully exemplified in Professor Arthur Thomson, whose great charm as a lecturer and a writer lies in his sympathetic imagination, and in J. H. Fabre, whose scientific works (not least *The Story Book of Science*) are a striking revelation of the penetrative spirit of the modern naturalist.

creation.¹ But, for another thing, the trend of modern biology has come to be directly away from the theory of the past. The pressure of the physical sciences and the first flush of the Darwinian theory of Evolution that so tortured the intellectually sensitive soul of Romanes² in the end of last century have ceased to trouble, and a new and fresh aspect has been revealed with the lapse of time. The conception of *vitalism* has now won favour in high quarters; and this means a heightened appreciation of the fact that it is impossible to explain life on purely mechanical principles. Thirty years ago, it would have seemed incredible that science should ever acquiesce in a conception so subversive of the accepted naturalistic interpretation. Physics and chemistry, in the reign of Tyndall and Huxley, were thought to be competent to explain everything. If everything were not actually explained, we were bid to wait with patience: it was only the matter of a little time, and the laboratory would make full

¹ Imagination has been finely defined by Wordsworth as

“ . . . clearest insight, amplitude of mind,
And reason in her most exalted mood.”

See also Tyndall, *Scientific Use of the Imagination* (Liverpool address to the British Association in 1870) and *The Scientific Imagination* (Belfast address to the British Association in 1874); also John Grote, *A Treatise on the Moral Ideal*, chap. iv., etc.

² See his *Candid Examination of Theism* and his posthumous *Thoughts on Religion*.

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disclosures. But things have not worked out so easily as was expected. After all physical and chemical explanations (and physics and chemistry can explain much in regard to the living organism), there is found to be the residuum of life; and Herbert Spencer himself, in the later and revised edition of his *Principles of Biology* (1898), frankly allows, "We are obliged to confess that Life in its essence cannot be conceived in physico-chemical terms." Life has its own nature and its own mode of action, and refuses to be mechanically explained — the living organism as a whole integrates and co-ordinates in a marvellous way; and the only course left seems to be to take it on its own conditions, and to work therefrom.

Even distinguished *chemists* have acknowledged this: such as Professor Bunge, in his text-book of *Physiological and Pathological Chemistry* (Lecture I.); and Emeritus-Professor Japp of Aberdeen, whose striking Presidential Address to the Chemical Section of the British Association at Bristol in 1898, on *Stereochemistry and Vitalism*, was devoted to the proof that life is a *directive* force, "which, whilst in no way violating the laws of the kinetics of atoms — whilst, indeed, acting through these laws — determines the course of their operation within the living organism."

One of the most distinguished exponents of Vitalism (as it has been called) or Neo-vitalism (as others designate it) is Dr. Hans Driesch of Heidelberg. For the office of Gifford Lecturer, treating a scientific subject with philosophical intent, Dr. Driesch was specially gifted. He is both a man of science and a philosopher, and in each realm he has signalized himself. He has the twofold qualification of M. Bergson (another Gifford Lecturer), each combining the biologist with the metaphysician ; but the two are entirely different types of mind. Keen and swift in his mental movements, possessed of a brilliant literary style and exhaustless in his power of felicitous illustration, M. Bergson rushes his biology along in an irresistible flow of speculative thinking, and partly by his mastery of verbal expression and partly by the vividness of his imagination and his penetrative insight leads captive the reader, even when not succeeding fully in convincing him. Dr. Driesch, on the other hand, lacks the brilliant literary style and the agile mental movement of M. Bergson, but he has the distinctive merit of unhasting massive treatment of his theme—closely reasoned and calmly (even laboriously) set forth step by step. Biology comes first with him, philosophy second,—although he himself might demur to this characterization. At every turn,

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we feel ourselves in the hands of a skilled scientific experimenter, whose mind is bent on finding truth; and the metaphysics is added on (rather than pervades), and takes much more of an academic form than we find in M. Bergson. While M. Bergson, with his affinity to mysticism, has been attracted by Plotinus, Dr. Driesch, endowed with less emotion, has found his master in Aristotle; and, of moderns, Kant has been the potent influence in moulding his thought.

Dr. Driesch's Gifford Lectures in Aberdeen (delivered before the University in the years 1907 and 1908) on *The Science and Philosophy of the Organism* is a notable work, and has attracted a great deal of attention and exerted a wide influence in our own country as elsewhere. It has been summarized by himself, and to some extent amplified, in his *Problem of Individuality* (four lectures delivered before the University of London, in 1913). Dr. Driesch is thoroughly convinced that the autonomy of life, as we find it in plant and animal, is non-mechanistic; and he sets to prove it by a long and sustained process of reasoning, resting largely on minute and careful experiments made by himself in Embryology. His method of proving Vitalism in the Gifford Lectures is very elaborate. It consists in a survey of all the spheres where observation and experiment

have shown life in such a way as to impress upon us the impossibility of accounting for it by the machine theory, and pressing home upon us the conviction that it is itself non-mechanical, non-spatial, and non-material. This is conjoined with a survey of the spheres in which it might be expected to disclose its non-mechanistic character, but where it has not done so in such a manner as to warrant the full corroborative conclusion. Emphasis, further, is laid on the fact that, in the scientific search for proof or verification, no phenomenon has been met with that militates against the autonomy of life: if phenomena do not always decisively prove it, they never disprove it. To this has to be added the lecturer's excessive caution in forming opinions or coming to definite conclusions, and his scrupulous care in not exaggerating the evidence in favour of his own doctrine. "It was want of scientific criticism and rigid logic," he says, "that discredited the old vitalism; we must render our work as difficult as possible to ourselves; we must hold the so-called 'Machine theory' of life as long as possible, we must hold it until we are really forced to give it up."¹ "I should prefer not to make any definite statement about our problem at present," he says in another place, speaking of a point in heredity,

¹ *The Science and Philosophy of the Organism*, vol. i. p. 187.

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"I myself believe that the nucleus plays an important part in heredity, perhaps even a greater one than protoplasm, but this is only my belief."¹ A man thus cautious predisposes us to listen to him.

His argument cannot here be elaborately reproduced, nor is such reproduction necessary for our purpose; but the substance of it consists in three proofs of vitalism — one from morphogenesis, another from heredity, and another from the behaviour or activities of the living organism. In each of these departments (morphogenesis, heredity, behaviour) it is shown that there is involved an agent of a non-mechanical kind—an agent that arranges and co-ordinates the materials given, in a way entirely different from anything of a machine-like physico-chemical character. This co-ordinating arranging agent he designates (borrowing a distinctive term from Aristotle, but considerably altering its meaning) "entelechy"²—a term that points to activity for an end or purpose, so that an organism is correctly understood only when interpreted teleologically. It is to be specially noted that "entelechy" simply arranges and co-ordinates. It is, therefore, neither energy nor a special form of energy-transformation, and yet is entirely in

¹ *The Science and Philosophy of the Organism*, vol. i. p. 236.

² For criticism of Dr. Driesch's theory of Entelechy, see Professor Bosanquet's *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 195, and Professor Pringle-Pattison's *The Idea of God*, pp. 77-80.

accord with the principle of the conservation of energy as applicable to the inorganic; and thus is it differentiated from the disparaged "vital force" of the old discarded biological vitalism.

Let us illustrate by an instance, taken from the section Experimental Morphogenesis, so as to show in one of the lower organisms the power of harmonious restitution, in the case of direct disintegration of its parts—the power of reproducing the whole and not merely the fragments of the dissociated portion. The example is the Ascidian *Clavellina*.

"In *Clavellina* the branchial apparatus is quite separated from the rest of the body. If you isolate it by a cut, it either regenerates the body in the usual way by budding processes, or it behaves very differently: it undergoes a complete reduction of form, until it is but a minute sphere, and then, after a few days of rest, transforms itself as it is into a *complete* little Ascidian. This, certainly, is a very strange process; but much more remarkable with regard to our problem is what follows. Isolate the branchial apparatus and then cut it into two pieces of any shape you like, each *portion* will then reduce its form, rest for a few days, and finally transform itself into a *complete* little animal, as did the whole branchial apparatus

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in the former experiment. The branchial apparatus of *Clavellina*, therefore, is the very type of a harmonious-equipotential system: each element of it is able to perform any single morphogenetic action that is required, and all the elements together work in harmony in each single case. For the cut may be made quite at random" (*The Problem of Individuality*, p. 15).¹

Now, the extraordinary phenomena here presented show that there are in the living organism "whole-making processes *sui generis*, that is, processes not reducible to the forms of inorganic beings"—they are efficient and formative. The phenomena cannot be explained by the action of stimuli from *without*, nor by purely *chemical* processes inside the organism, nor by the *machine* theory. There remains only the doctrine of the autonomy of life or vitalism: "there is some agent at work in morphogenesis which is not of the type of physico-chemical agents."

The same conclusion is forced upon us by a consideration of the phenomena of Inheritance or Heredity. The extraordinary amount of labour and scientific experiment that has been expended in elucidating this subject since the researches of Darwin and the publication of *The Origin*

¹ The same example occurs in the Gifford Lectures, i. pp. 129-130.

of *Species* in 1859 is well-known, and general interest in it has been aroused and has been kept alive by incessant discussions in public (as at the meetings of the British Association) and in many learned biological treatises. Lamarckism and Weismannism have become to us familiar names as designative of antithetic theoretical points of view; the "Mutation" theory is significant to every one who has made even a slight study of biological evolution; and the Mendelian Law has been brought to our doors, as it were, in concrete form by experiments in hybridization with plants in our gardens or with poultry in the farmyard. The vast mass of facts collected is arrestive indeed; and, when carefully analysed and closely examined, in the way that Dr. Driesch has done, enforces the unique and non-mechanical nature of vitalism. From these facts, thus analysed and examined, Dr. Driesch claims the right to draw an independent *second* proof of the autonomy of life, which he clinches by the emphatic utterance: "We say that it is a mere absurdity to assume that a complicated machine, typically different in the three dimensions of space, could be divided many times, and in spite of that always be the whole: therefore there cannot exist any sort of machine as the starting-point and basis of development"¹

¹ *The Science and Philosophy of the Organism*, vol. i. p. 226

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With equal emphasis does Dr. J. S. Haldane condemn the mechanistic theory at this point, although he has his own way of interpreting the organism ultimately. "The Mechanistic theory of heredity," he says, "is not merely unproven, it is impossible. It involves such absurdities that no intelligent person who has thoroughly realized its meaning and implications can continue to hold."¹

Not less strikingly is the same conclusion enforced by the movements and activities of the living organism. Such phenomena as reflex actions, tropisms, and instincts impress it upon us. For example, in instinct, the marvellous constructive power of the bee, the beaver, and the ant; of the bird in its nest-building, and the spider in its web-spinning; the annual migration of birds, and the unerring efficacy with which the wasp paralyzes the captured insect by stinging it at the proper points of its body without actually killing it, and depriving it of its wings and its antennæ (as I have seen it do), thereby rendering effective escape impossible, before carrying it off to its home as food to await the emergence of its offspring. These and hundreds of other cases, in which the adaptation of the instinct to the needs of the individual or of the collective life is so

¹ *Mechanism, Life and Personality*, p. 58.

wonderful, are instances of vitalism transcending what is explicable mechanistically. But what shall we say when we reach higher still and approach such a complex of activities as is found in the brain and the nervous system of the higher animals and, above all, of man? The whole here is a unity of interrelated parts, graded in their functions—spinal cord and brain, middle brain and hemispheres—every part of the system in organic relation with every other, and the interconnexions “so numerous and so intimate that parts widely separate may yet act at once and together,” and the lower grades subject to the control of the higher. As Bain summarizes it: “Through every part there is a functional continuity—lower centres modifying and directing higher, higher stimulating and controlling lower, and both in a whirl of perpetual interaction. And, this interactive play of nerve effects, constructive and destructive, is the physical correlate of mental phenomena. . . . From the simple reflexes of the cord, through the complex elaborations of the middle brain to the final alchemies of the cerebral cortex, the rise is unbroken; and no one part, but the whole system in its unity, shall we properly regard as the nervous concomitant of mind.”¹

¹ *The Senses and the Intellect*, 4th edition, pp. 53-54.

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Surely there is more than a machine, in organism; and to regard vitalism simply as mechanical is to miss its true character. A machine that is "self-stoking," as Professor Arthur Thomson expresses it,¹ "self-repairing, self-preserving, self-adjusting, self-increasing, self-reproducing," is a machine only by the courtesy of language.

Now, I do not say that the doctrine that Vitalism is not Mechanism, that life is essentially free, spontaneous, and creative, whether in the form that Dr. Driesch has presented it or in any other form such as that of M. Bergson,² is equivalent to an advocacy of Theism (Theism, in all likelihood was never in Dr. Driesch's mind at any point in his biological investigations); but what I do say is that it falls so readily into line with Theism as to render the theistic belief easier of acceptance than it otherwise might be. We have not now to cope with the dead wall of naturalism pure and simple as was formerly necessary. We start with the admission that life cannot be explained by what is sufficient for the explanation of the non-living; and that is a distinct advantage. In living beings we find a higher manifestation of Reality, of the Power that underlies all things, than the inorganic affords: we are moving on a different

¹ Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. viii. p. 76.

² See his *Creative Evolution*.

plane. If the "vital impetus (*élan vital*)," as M. Bergson calls it, is non-mechanical, non-spatial, non-material, life is inexplicable materialistically, and demands the concept of finality or purpose. This goes so far. It prepares the way for our proceeding onward to the yet higher positions of philosophy and natural theology. For, if vitalism is inexplicable by mechanism, much more are consciousness and thought as we find them in ourselves—self-consciousness in all its aspects (intellectual, ethical, and religious alike). Not in mechanism is the secret of the universe to be found. Mind is not matter, and cannot be gauged by materialism: its working is not that of an automaton. And, although there may be vitalism without the implication of intelligence, morality, and religion, there cannot be intelligence, morality, and religion without vitalism being presupposed.

And so, Dr. Driesch is not satisfied with the biology of his subject alone, but, before concluding his lectures, goes on to formulate its metaphysics; and, in doing so, he permits us to see how far his cautious nature allows him to proceed on the lines of philosophy towards a theistic position.

His metaphysics is in the main that of Immanuel Kant. He accepts the Kantian theory of knowledge, but is careful to add to Kant's twelve

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categories the important concept of teleology, or finality as he likes best to call it; and he is an adherent of the Kantian Ethics, but does not rest satisfied with its merely formal character. When, therefore, he approaches the notion of the Absolute, he does so with a due consciousness of the difficulties and obscurity of the subject. "It seems to me," he says, "that there are three possibilities, three windows, as I might say—though *dim* windows only—through which at least we are able to see that there *is* such a thing as absoluteness."¹ These three windows are Morality, Memory, and Givenness,—which also he designates respectively "the Thou," "the Ego," and "the It." Morality, inasmuch as it rests on the Categorical Imperative or unconditional command of Duty, is more than phenomenal: it implies independence of the individual Ego, and, therefore, presupposes the Absolute. Personal Identity—that continuity of individual being which each of us through the operation of Memory feels himself to possess—"the fact that not only self-consciousness itself endures, but also something that is presented to consciousness"²—does the same. So also is it with Givenness, or the "matter" supplied to us, in the Aristotelian sense of "matter" as the correlate of

¹ *The Science and Philosophy of the Organism*, ii. p. 359.

² *Id.* ii. 362.

"form": "Let the reason of immediate Givenness be what it may, 'I,' as the conscious Ego, *do certainly not create it consciously out of myself*; it is very often contrary to, or at least indifferent to, my will." What, then, in the light of teleology, can we say of the Absolute? "In the first place," to give his own answer, "we have a *factual* right to say: wherever the reasoning mind finds *organic living individuals*, it finds objectified active reason, or *active reason as its object*." The experiments on the Clavellina brought out the essentially teleological and constructive character of life in the Ascidian. Heredity pointed to this same teleological characteristic of life; and so too did reflex actions, instincts, and the like. The dictum holds with regard to living organisms in general. "*Absoluteness in this respect therefore* must be such as to be in some—unintelligible—connexion with something like reason."¹ "And in the second place we have at least a *hypothetic* right to speak of certain constellations in givenness, other than organisms, which are teleological in the sense of a statical *harmony of nature*."² This right to an hypothesis is, of course, scientifically valid; and it is in strict accordance with scientific requirement. Now, the question is, does this static harmony justify us in going back

¹ *The Science and Philosophy of the Organism*, ii. 369.

² *Id.* ii. 369-370.

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to "an original primary entelechy that *made* it just as the artist makes an object of art?" "Yes" is Dr. Driesch's answer: to this the human mind is *forced*, he maintains, as soon as it accepts a universal natural harmony of *any* kind. But, as this entelechy is *immanent* in the universe, it is not to be conceived as the *Creator* of absolute reality, but simply as the artist, that has *ordered* certain parts of it. So that the conclusion we have reached is, that, "in the sense of a primary entelechy of order of constellation in the world," God is only a *δημιουργός* or Artificer (back, then, to Plato's *Timæus*) shaping given material; "unintelligible in the last resort, as all religions maintain, and only approachable by analogies, like all absoluteness. For it is only through ground-glass windows, as it were, that we are allowed to look into absoluteness; we only know the 'fact' of the Absolute absolutely; whilst bound to our categorical system, we only know quite vaguely the 'how' of the Absolute."¹

This is rather a meagre result; and certainly we have not reached the fulness of the conception of God that Theism as grounded in human nature demands, much less that which Christianity affords, with its richness of content, based on the conception of Divine Fatherhood and Eternal Redemption.

¹ *The Science and Philosophy of the Organism*, ii. 371.

But is it not all that the mere notion of cosmic teleology can give us, if we take it as a *proof* of God's being? We need to go farther, as I maintained in last lecture, and accept the idea of God as a presupposition of human experience, a postulate of human nature, before we reach a fuller finding. But if we do that, then cosmic teleology, and, not least, the purposiveness that is characteristic of the living organism and the nature of life itself, may quite legitimately be used to fill in our idea of God or to enrich its meaning. The "windows" are not so "dim" as Dr. Driesch would represent them. Apart from the light given by Ethics or Morality (which is regarded by many philosophers as very far from *dim*—see, for instance, Professor Sorley's Gifford Lectures on *Moral Values and the Idea of God*, published only a month or two ago¹), and apart from the nature and working of memory and the ground therein given for our conviction of Personal Identity, implying continued future existence to the individual or the immortality of the soul,—apart from these, which are of the utmost consequence to the metaphysician, the material world as ordered and coherent has a *meaning*, and the living organism as a unity of a special and peculiar type has a *meaning*; and "having a meaning" is

¹ Delivered in February 1919.

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the same thing as saying "implicates rationality." Both serve to impress us with the *immanence* of the Divine Reason, His ever-operative agency in a world of "becoming." They illuminate and corroborate, although they do not strictly speaking *prove*, the Divine existence, and they powerfully conduce to religious reverence, for, being mysterious, they can hardly fail to excite the wonder of the reflective person, to evoke in him the emotion of awe, and to draw forth his admiration.

This theistic conclusion is shared by the other distinguished Gifford Lecturer who has treated of Biology—Professor J. Arthur Thomson. Professor Thomson's lectures, delivered before the University of St. Andrews during sessions 1915-16 and 1916-17, had for their title *A Study of Animate Nature*, and were concerned with "The Realm of Organisms as it is" and "The Evolution of the Realm of Organisms." Unfortunately, they have not yet been published,¹ and so I cannot do them justice here; but a very full and illuminating syllabus of each course was issued at the time of delivery, and no reader of it can fail to be arrested by the clear and felicitous exposition, even in abstract, and derive inspiration from the lecturer's enthusiasm

¹ February 1919.

for his subject. To him, the living beings among whom he moves, from the lowest to the highest, are his "fellows" and his "friends"; and so he can interpret them in a way that mere scientific curiosity, revelling in facts and observations simply, could never attain to. It is the sympathetic imagination (as I said at the beginning) that does it, and that makes the presentation of living processes and living creatures to glow.

The lectures traverse a vast area and come across the theistic position at many turns. But more particularly towards the end, when Evolution comes specially to the front and is shown in all its wonders, problems that the "disharmonies" and "shadows" of life suggest in connexion with the conception of a God all-wise, all-good, and all-powerful are directly faced—such as, the extinction of highly specialized types of animals—types perishing because of their very perfection (as palæontology shows), disease, parasitism, Nature's so-called "cruelty," senescence and death, wastefulness. Much that is fresh and helpful is said on these topics, and the explanatory power of Evolution is brought out and enforced with great effectiveness. Only the conclusion of the lectures can here be given, but it is a very striking one:—

"The general conclusion of our study is that a scientific description of Animate Nature and its

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Evolution is congruent with the view that the whole is the expression of an originaive purpose. The scientific formulation is consistent with the conclusion, which must be reached along other lines, that the 'Nature' we know intimately may be interpreted as one of the expressions of the Divine Spirit. No conclusion along our lines of study is likely to be within sight of the truth that does not sound the note of joyous admiration: 'Prais'd be the fathomless Universe, for life and joy, and for objects and knowledge curious.' But shall we not rather seek to worship the Author of the Universe—albeit so imperfectly discerned—from whom all comes, by whom all lives, in whom all ends?"¹

If modern biology can end thus, we are justified in claiming it as an aid to Theism.

¹ Syllabus of Second Course, p. 27.

LECTURE III

REFLECTIVE COMMON SENSE—"INEVITABLE BELIEFS": MR. ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR

"In every object of sensitive or rational experience God Himself lies hid."—ST. BONAVENTURA.

"There is an easier way to heaven than Homer's chain; an easy logick may conjoin a heaven and earth in one argument, and, with less than a sorites, resolve all things to God."

SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

"God and the world are mere names, like the Being of the Eleatics, unless some human qualities are added on to them."

B. JOWETT.

IT is not usual, in philosophical discussion, to appeal to "the plain man" in any very serious fashion: rather, we are in the habit of using him, simply to point a contrast, or to illustrate a fallacy, or to enforce a warning. But the experience of the ordinary man has vast significance to the student of human nature, and cannot with impunity be neglected; and, in the sphere of religion in particular, it is often our best means of discovering the true nature of the phenomena that we are investigating. It may be so that the religious

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instinct in the plain man is stronger than his power of thought or reflection, but he must not on that account be despised. Reflection comes after instinct in the order of development, and needs to be supported by it. The average man's view of God and his religious beliefs may need recasting at many points and in many particulars; but the spontaneous and unsophisticated way in which they appear and are expressed may serve to show us that, in simple souls whose lives are pure, the foundation is stable, being laid in the human constitution.

This fact has been clearly perceived by several of the more recent Gifford lecturers, who have used it in various ways to good purpose—William James, for instance, in his *Varieties of Religious Experience* (delivered before the University of Edinburgh) and Mr. Arthur Balfour in his *Theism and Humanism* (at the University of Glasgow).

James has the advantage over many thinkers of combining in himself the trained psychologist with the trained physiologist, and his keen appreciation of the intimate relation of mind and body stands him in good stead in his handling of religious experiences. His interest in the unsophisticated is but a consequence of his experiential or empirical method of proceeding in all his studies, and is involved in his very attitude as pragmatist.

Experience of men in general is to him of inestimable value, but so also is the specific experience of individuals and groups of individuals; for he aims, as psychologist, at understanding the working of the human mind in all its phases, and seeks to generalize on the widest possible inductive basis. And, more than this, he clearly sees the psychological importance of unhealthy and pathological experience as a means of insight into the working of the human mind; and he is not afraid to face the abnormal in the interpretation of religion—"the sick soul" and "the divided self," and the like. The very title of his first lecture, "Religion and Neurology," strikes the keynote of his Gifford prelections. All this we owe to what he himself would have called a man with a "romantic," as distinguished from a man with a "classic-academic," imagination.¹

Mr. Balfour, with more of the classic-academic imagination, is so far alike that he has distinct sympathy with the plain man and his unreasoned experience, and realizes that in him we have the raw material of religion; though he does not go farther and search "the menagerie and the mad-house," as James expresses it, "the nursery, the prison, and the hospital" for material. He is satisfied with the normal, where he finds what he calls

¹ *Memoirs and Studies*, p. 148.

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"common sense"—which he proceeds to present to our favourable consideration, after he has passed it through the alembic of Reflection.

It is Mr. Balfour's position—as most suitable to our purpose—that I mean now to consider more particularly.

In the suggestive autobiographical passage of his Gifford Lectures, Mr. Balfour tells us that, when he entered at Cambridge as an undergraduate in the middle sixties, he went "with a very small equipment of either philosophy or science, but a very keen desire to discover *what* I ought to think of the world and *why*."¹ The very keen desire here indicated has remained with him ever since, and has prompted all his brilliant literary efforts in the region of philosophical inquiry. It is a healthy desire called forth by the pressing problem set to every thinking serious man by life and its experiences. It is precisely the problem that all philosophy has in view, whose end is to reflect upon and probe experience and to give a reasoned interpretation of it. Mr. Balfour's handling of the theme in his Gifford Lectures (delivered at the University of Glasgow in 1914) is characterized by an infusion of personal feeling and conviction into the argument that gives a

¹ *Theism and Humanism*, p. 137.

specific warmth and interest to it, and makes the whole assume the form of an exposition and justification of his own religious and theistic creed in its ultimate principles. There are two kinds of people that he has constantly before his mind as he proceeds; one with whom he fully sympathizes, and the other who is the chief object of his criticism and aversion. The first (to whom I have just referred) is the plain man; the second is the man of science. With the man of science in himself, however, I hasten to say, and with his work he is entirely sympathetic, and has shown his sympathy in practical ways. His quarrel arises only when the scientific man goes beyond his own proper sphere and adds to his scientific functions the rôle of the philosopher. His philosophy has then been wont to become what Mr. Balfour, carrying on his criticism in *The Foundations of Belief*, distinctively designates "Naturalism," and issues in some such form as Positivism, Agnosticism, or Materialism. For all such, and for the empiricism that gives it verve, he has only sustained antagonism and ultimately peremptory dismissal.

The materials of Mr. Balfour's argument in the lectures are what he calls "inevitable beliefs"; by which he means such beliefs as men in general entertain and cannot help entertaining—beliefs, for example, in an external independent material

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world, or in the existence of living persons other than oneself who think and feel and will. Yet beliefs of this stamp, although *inevitable*, have not their truth thereby guaranteed. They have greater or less probability, nothing more; but none the less they guide us. In many cases they are the results of tendencies, rather than the conclusions of logic; their inevitableness is "merely an extreme form of plausibility," and their guidance may "lead to error as well as to truth."¹ To Probability as generating belief, Mr. Balfour gives great prominence in his discussion. But it is not the probability of the mathematician that he is thinking of, but probability in a more practical form (remembering Butler, who defined probability as "the very guide of life"), estimated by man's native sagacity—a far more potent influence, he conceives, than philosophers have hitherto realized or acknowledged. He calls it "intuitive probability," and ascribes to it such a belief as that in universal causation, or belief in an external world. Further, he declares belief, so far as the causation of it is concerned, to be ultimately "a-logical" or non-rational: although reason may figure among its proximate causes, "it is always possible to trace back the causal series to a point where every trace of rationality vanishes; where we are left face to

¹ *Theism and Humanism*, p. 219.

face with conditions of beliefs—social, physiological, and physical—which, considered in themselves, are quite a-logical in their character.”¹

What, then, of the *value* of beliefs? Value is determined, according to him, by origin. If drawn from a purely naturalistic source, beliefs can have no high value. But many of man’s common-sense beliefs and emotions are felt to have the highest possible value: they have worth, not as ministering to some further end, dear to the heart of the individual, nor as arising from the perception of the adjustment of means to end, which constituted the meaning of “design,” to the older teleologists (such as Paley), but as intrinsically precious in themselves and for their own sakes. But this surpassing value bespeaks a correspondingly worthy source. The fascination of the beautiful in and for itself, the attractiveness and elevating character of moral action and of the ethical ideal, the inspiring power of goodness, and, yet again (in the intellectual sphere), man’s unshakable conviction in an independent world of matter—all point to goodness, beauty, and truth of a transcendent kind. The Divine lies at the back of them or the root of them; remove the Divine, and their character and value disappear. A godless world would be an unintelligible world.

¹ *Theism and Humanism*, p. 46.

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It is an argument, then, from values—values of our actual conscious experience, yet not of our own making, but existent of themselves and recognized by mankind in general. These values indicate “design”: they are not *chance*-produced, as naturalism maintains; they are there with a meaning, for a purpose. Chance-origin would be destructive of them; design-origin alone is valuable (“value is lost if design be absent”¹). This design-origin is everything to Mr. Balfour. In sketching the line of his reasoning in the “Introductory” to Part I., he concludes with the sentence: “If I am successful in my endeavour I shall have done something to show that ‘design’ is demanded by all that we deem most valuable in life, by beauty, by morals, by scientific truth: and that it is design far deeper in purpose, far richer in significance, than any which could be inferred from the most ingenious and elaborate adjustments displayed by organic life.”² Mr. Bosanquet, in *The Principle of Individuality and Value*,³ has further analysed teleology into “the expansion of the idea of end into a connection with fruition and value, and into throwing off all special connection with the ideas of termination as against a process, and super-ordination as against means.”

¹ *Theism and Humanism*, p. 44; see also pp. 63, etc.

² *Id.* p. 51.

³ p. 132.

But now, if these design-values require God for their support and presupposition, what is the nature of the God whose support is thus indispensable? If they come from Him and point to Him, and in Him alone find their ultimate explanation and from Him derive their constraining power, what is He? Mr. Balfour leaves us in no doubt about the answer. God is no bare metaphysical abstraction, such as we find the deity of Spinoza and of intellectual pantheism in general to be, nor is He an indefinable Absolute, such as the mystic of the Neo-platonic type fashions, but the God of *religion*—a personal Deity, living, loving, wise, the Creator of the world and its constant Preserver: “a God whom we can love, a God to whom men can pray, who takes sides, who has purposes and preferences, whose attributes, howsoever conceived, leave unimpaired the possibility of a personal relation between Himself and those whom He has created.”¹ This absolves Mr. Balfour from the necessity of entering into controversy on the metaphysical nature of the Deity, and also from examination of the dogmatic questions that exercise the ingenuity of the professional theologian. It is essentially the God of ordinary belief with whom he is concerned; and, with commendable completeness, he does not confine the

¹ *Theism and Humanism*, p. 21.

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theistic conception to the ethical side of human nature, but insists upon the necessity of taking into consideration æsthetics and cognition also; the beautiful and the true demand God, as well as the good: "nor could I be quite content," he says, "with any form of Theism which did not sustain in every essential part the full circle of human interests."¹

The presentation of his case derives its force, not only from the nature and substance of the argument, but also from the arrestive and attractive literary style in which it is expressed and the keen dialectic that enlivens it; from the copiousness, variety, and felicity of its illustrations; and, above all, from the personality of the writer which is revealed in it at every turn. Theistic reasoning has been made to *glow*, as befits a theme in which heart and head are alike enlisted.

That the argument itself is in great measure sound I should be the last to deny. The handling of the presuppositions of experience is vital; the prominence given to "faith" as guiding both the philosopher and the plain man is opportune ("the philosopher admits—in theory—no ground of knowledge but reason. I recognize that, in fact, the whole human race, including the philosopher,

¹ *Theism and Humanism*, p. 249.

himself, lives by faith alone" ¹); and the appeal to Æsthetics as an acknowledgment of the theistic significance of the emotional side of our being is very much in place. I could only wish, at this point, that a freer use had been made of other great emotions in connexion with theism. All the outstanding emotions associated with Power and those that originate in the altruism of human nature, together with emotions inspired by social relations and intercourse with persons, such as awe, reverence, and veneration, have a distinctive theistic implication.

But, while acknowledging the ability and cogency of the general treatment of the theme, I feel that several points call for critical comment.

In the first place, I cannot but think that Mr. Balfour is handicapped by his intense aversion to empiricism. While intent on disclosing its defects, he is backward in appreciating its merits. This arises apparently from a native dislike which showed itself as far back as the beginning of his undergraduate residence in Cambridge. It certainly would not have been mitigated by the atmosphere of the Trinity College of the time, to which he attached himself and which was then under the mastership of Whewell. J. S. Mill was no *persona grata* with the Master of Trinity, nor

¹ *Theism and Humanism*, p. 273.

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did his principles receive indulgent consideration. At any rate, it seems to me a pity that he has not been able to enter more fully or dispassionately into the spirit of empirical psychology and inductive logic, and to realize their value in connexion with Theistic reasoning. This defect makes itself felt at many points of the argument. When he delights in designating J. S. Mill's reasoning "this flimsy philosophy,"¹ or when he refers to inductive logic contemptuously as "so-called Inductive Logic," of which "it is scarce worth while to speak,"² he can hardly expect to carry every reader along with him.

In the next place, the nature of inevitable beliefs as explained leaves me rather uncomfortable. I presume that "inevitable" is practically a synonym for "irresistible": indeed, the belief in external reality is called "inevitable," and it is also designated "an irresistible assumption."³ If so, then it would appear that inevitable beliefs—beliefs entertained irresistibly, not only by an occasional individual, or by a few sections of mankind, but by men generally—ought to be a safe guide to truth. But these beliefs, we are told, if they may guide us to truth, may also lead us to error. How, then, are we to be sure that the theistic truth embodied in inevitable belief may

¹ *Theism and Humanism*, p. 140.

² *Id.* p. 176.

³ p. 171.

not be error? Is it enough to refer to our appreciation of *value*? "Value" itself is an ambiguous word, and, being taken over from Political Economy, is apt to bring its commercial associations along with it. This being so, we require a fuller consideration of the grading of values and of the principle that underlies it than is here offered. There is need of further definition and elaboration of concepts, and additional safeguarding explanations.

Indeed, the whole doctrine of intuitive probability, I feel, needs further analysis; for the very name seems almost a contradiction in terms, "intuition" (according to accepted philosophical usage) being immediate and producing absolute *certainty*, while *probability* is the result of weighing evidence. Take one of Mr. Balfour's leading instances, that of belief in an external world. By the man of science, no less than by the ordinary man, the existence of a world of matter outside of us and independent of us is taken for granted, and without that assumption he could not proceed with his investigations and experiments. The external world is conceived by him as existing apart from his perception of it, but at the same time as the cause of his perceptions. This postulate "science is compelled to use but is unable to demonstrate." "How, then, are we to class it?" he asks. "It is

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not a law of thought in the accepted meaning of that expression. We are not rationally required to accept it by the very structure of our thinking faculties. . . . On the other hand, it is not an inference from experience; neither is it an analytic judgment in which the predicate is involved in the subject. Described in technical language, it would seem to be *a priori* without being necessary, and synthetic without being empirical—qualities which, in combination, scarcely fit into any familiar philosophic classification. According to the view which I desire to press in these lectures, this marks a philosophic omission. I regard the belief in an external world as one of a class whose importance has been ignored by philosophy though all science depends on them.”¹ How, then, is the belief in an external world to be classed? It belongs, we are told, to a group of beliefs vouched for by “intuitive probability.” But the question is, How does the physicist himself feel with regard to this belief? Has he any dubiety regarding it? No, he accepts it without doubt or question, not as probable but as certain, because this is precisely how the world of matter appears to him *from his own definite standpoint and for his own particular purpose*. He is not philosophizing on matter, but experimenting with it and trying to ascertain its qualities and

¹ *Theism and Humanism*, p. 173.

structure as a given something. He takes it for what it is worth practically, just as the plain man does. But thus taken, it is unfalteringly believed in. The question of probability and, therefore, the attitude of doubt never arises in him: the belief is from this standpoint *necessary* and not merely probable. The meaning of this raises the whole question of the origin and growth of our knowledge of the external world, and the determining of how much in sense perception is intuitive and how much the result of experience and association. That there is something intuitive in any perception of an external object is evident enough; for all perception, as Reid long ago maintained, and Kant later endorsed, begins with "a natural judgment"—a judgment declaring that in the perceptive act something is immediately given, recognized as here and now present and as different from, or other than, the percipient. But what that something fully is in itself—how it is characterized and to be grouped along with certain objects and differentiated from others—is matter of inference and association. The first part is intuitive and gives certainty; the second has to gather force and clearness by being subjected to the tests of experience, and may be said to involve *probability*. But the process is perfectly well known. Not only is association at work strengthening con-

viction and ultimately making perception appear wholly intuitive, but in the constant testing of our conviction of external reality by actual reference to matter as experienced, our reference has never failed to bring out the same result, to produce the same impression, so that there is nothing contradictory of our experience to suggest doubt. The scientific investigator goes back, time after time, in his laboratory to the materials on which he is operating, and unfailingly finds them there offering themselves to his manipulation and not requiring first to be created or brought into being by himself. *He* is not their creator; he is their interrogator and scrutinizer. And what he finds he records with absolute assurance that his record is that of what is real.

There are, no doubt, other cases of belief that influence the man of science that do depend on likelihood or probability of a different order—that anticipate evidence, instead of being grounded on it, that “guide research, and in some shape or other turn out to be true.”¹ Such may be found, in the history of science, in connexion with the Atomic Theory and with the doctrine of the Conservation of Energy. The explanation of these, Mr. Balfour refers to “tendency” or “inclination.” Let us grant the explanation, but let us also remember that the

¹ *Theism and Humanism*, p. 223.

inclination or tendency has first been contracted by the man of science himself, and is explicable by the psychological principles of habit or association; for it is the nature of habit to produce not only facility or ease in doing a thing, but also a predisposition to do it. Let us remember, further, that it is partly the function of psychology to expound the conditions of the production of such tendency or inclination and to suggest the limits within which it may be trusted; and partly the function of inductive logic to warn us against the fallacies that such tendency may lead to—as when Bacon laid down and elaborated his scheme of *Idola* (phantasms, spectres, false appearances, “imagines”¹) in the *Novum Organum* as directly suited to the scientific investigation of Nature. There is no new kind of belief here that Philosophy has not taken account of. There is simply a case of what is well known to psychology—the case of a specialist’s nature being “subdued to what it works in, like the dyer’s hand.”²

Closely allied to this is a third point. Belief, we are told, is ultimately non-rational or “a-logical.” This assertion is true if it simply means that the individual’s beliefs are not usually fully reasoned

¹ See *De Augmentis Scientiarum*, v. 4; also *Novum Organum*, i. Aph. 23, 39-44.

² Shakespeare, *Sonnets*, cxi.

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out by himself, or explicitly justified to himself at all points on grounds satisfactory to the reason. They are simply acted on, and suffice. It is also true if it means that many things besides pure logical or intellectual processes may go to the creation and support of beliefs—such as feelings and emotions, the working of the imagination, custom or association, wishes and desires. But it is not true if it be taken as implying either that *all* the grounds of belief are ultimately non-rational or that any belief is held and clung to persistently in the full consciousness that it is irrational. True, Tertullian, arguing against the docetism of Marcion, gloried in the position taken up regarding the Christian verities of the death of the Son of God and His resurrection, that they were to be believed because they were impossible; *prorsus credibile est, quia ineptum est . . . certum est, quia impossibile est*.¹ But this he did, not because he disowned rationality, but because he held that rationality itself, on the part of man, consisted in submitting his finite judgment to God's revealed word. Divine revelation goes beyond human reason, and the mere fact that something is divinely revealed, especially something on which

¹ The whole passage from Tertullian, *de Carne Christi*, 5, runs : "Natus est Dei filius : non pudet quia pudendum est ; et mortuus est Dei filius : prorsus credibile est, quia ineptum est ; et sepultus resurrexit : certum est, quia impossibile est."

hang stupendous spiritual issues, however incredible in itself it may appear to be, is the highest warrant of its truth. This seemed to him to be the proper way of reverently exalting the wisdom of God.

But further, it should be borne in mind that, in the case of many of our ordinary beliefs, if they have not been reasoned out by ourselves separately, they rest on the reasoning of others, or on the long experience of mankind. They come to the individual highly attested. We are social beings and the heirs of the ages, which means that we have subconscious reasons for belief that render the belief not less rational and not less trustworthy, but, perhaps, more rational and more trustworthy, seeing that it has behind it the experience of the race, than if it had been forged by ourselves (each for himself) explicitly and formally by a clear conscious process of inference or reasoning. The feeling that one has with regard to Mr. Balfour's use of the term "a-logical" or non-rational is that he is too much restricting "rational" and "reason (*logos*)" to the discursive process of "reasoning," forgetting its ampler and more significant meaning, which allows of the rationality of faith or trust as well as of ratiocination.

Again, fourthly, it is insisted that the value of

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beliefs is determined by their origin; and, consequently, it is concluded that the higher values—such as æsthetic and ethical values—are not only inadequately explained by naturalism (or, indeed, are not explained by it at all), but that they would cease to be higher if they were so explained: a naturalistic origin of them would be degrading. Now, that value and origin are two quite different things is unquestionable. But it is not obvious that the source of a conception or a belief necessarily disparages its worth when attained. For the ordinary purposes of life we may draw, and we do draw, the distinction in our social relations between high birth and low birth, and we are apt to despise the second and over-exalt the first. But however convenient this may be for practical ends, it is not determinative of real value. Out of refuse matter, which we usually look upon as vile, the refiner can bring precious things; and some of the most prized substances of everyday domestic and industrial use are extracted from coal tar.¹ Their lowly origin makes no difference to their real value. Value is what it is, whencesoever it comes and whensoever it comes. And if it has come from something in Nature that we call lowly, what then?

¹ See *The Treasures of Coal Tar*, by Professor A. Findlay. London: Geo. Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1917.

Simply this, that we have erred in drawing a hard-and-fast line between the base and the dignified in Nature, when no such line exists in fact. But this does not overturn the significance that we attach to value in itself: it merely raises our estimation of Nature, just as the Darwinian teaching that man is descended from the lower animals does not degrade man, but only raises our idea of the lower creatures and inspires us with a higher regard for them and their potentialities.

Last of all, it would have been well, I think, had Mr. Balfour given a prominent place in his theistic argument to the power of the Will in relation to belief. There is such a thing as "the will to believe," if properly defined; by which I mean, not a mere inclination or determination or resolve to believe in the interests of an already accepted theory insufficiently supported by evidence, much less a resolve to believe from prejudice in the face of overwhelming contrary evidence, but an original earnest attitude, interest, or predisposition on the active or volitional side of our being to keep open our soul to the call of the Ideal and show ourselves ready to respond to the Truth when it comes. In "the will to believe" we have the active working in us of the element of desire (for all will is motivated by desire); the ready response of our nature to the demand that the object of belief

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makes upon us, all obstacles arising from distortion of our view being removed, prompt readiness to assent to what is felt by us to be in conformity with our natural inmost wants or cravings and capable of satisfying them. Such desire is not an arbitrary or capricious thing; for the will operates in conjunction with our knowledge and enlightenment, and, in particular, with our formed character: it presupposes a prepared or congenial disposition in the believing subject towards the content of belief. So that the will to believe is only an aspect of the native activity of the human mind—its desire to know and to inquire, to search and to discover, to put questions eagerly wishing and expecting an answer, so as to be satisfied, accompanied with readiness to accept the answer when it comes; and without this readiness and will to believe (and preparedness to act upon the belief), the power of evidence would fail to constrain us (the will would thwart the intellect) because it would appeal to an indifferent or insensitive subject. A mind not wholly wishful to reach the truth, or to rest in it or obey it when found, is to that extent a mind impervious to truth and incapable of unbiassed belief.¹ There is a deep and far-reaching significance in the utterance, "If

¹ See Josiah Royce, *The World and the Individual*, vol. ii. p. 30; also R. Flint, *Agnosticism*, pp. 397-400.

any man *willeth* to do His will, he shall know of the teaching";¹ and an attunement and readiness of response of the will and the affections is the prerequisite of full understanding: "Was not our heart burning within us, while He spoke to us by the way?"²

These considerations apart, Mr. Balfour's Theism has definite and well-marked characteristics and implications, and has been widely welcomed. It is no mere abstract speculation of an outside observer, but is drawn from within the religious experience itself—the account of a man recording as he himself has felt and apprehends. It is reasoned, indeed, and keenly dialectical, and never loses sight of the main position that "all we think best in human culture, whether associated with beauty, goodness, or knowledge, requires God for its support," that "Humanism without Theism loses more than half its value,"³ but it centres in the concept of the Divine Being and of His relation to man. It rests, as I interpret it, on the full recognition of God as a Person, and of religion as being essentially a personal relationship between the individual and the Supreme; so that in religious experience we have a distinct and unique revelation of Ultimate Reality. It

¹ St. John vii. 17.

² St. Luke xxiv. 32.

³ *Theism and Humanism*, p. 248.

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requires, therefore, no impersonal Absolute standing (as it were) at the back of the Divine and overshadowing it; affecting it as a kind of *Necessity* from without (like the Greek *ἀνάγκη*), limiting it and coercing it. God *is* the Absolute, and an Absolute that is constantly active and effective—ever operative in the world, directing and over-ruling, ever manifesting Himself in Nature and in Life and making His presence felt and Himself known, ever present to and influencing the human soul: God is no “departmental Deity.” The Divine *immanence* is at the very centre of Mr. Balfour’s theistic presentation—“Providence” and “Inspiration” are his two supreme categories;¹ but the Divine *transcendence* is postulated as well. A merely immanent God, like that of much modern philosophy (say, the philosophy of Signor Benedetto Croce),² would not be sufficient. If God is the self-revealer, making Himself felt by us in the Beautiful, the Good, and the True, He is also the Transcendent One, whose transcendence is implied in these very revelations, in whom the Highest Perfection and never ceasing Activity meet. The very conception of “Godhead” demands this.

¹ *Theism and Humanism*, p. 266.

² See Mr. Clement C. J. Webb’s first course of Gifford Lectures on *God and Personality*, p. 157.

LECTURE IV

GOD AS REVEALED IN MAN AND IN NATURE, AND THE PHILOSOPHICAL FUNCTION OF FAITH: A. CAMPBELL FRASER.

"The absolute things, the last things, the over-lapping things, are the truly philosophic concerns; all superior minds feel seriously about them, and the mind with the shortest views is simply the mind of the more shallow man."—WILLIAM JAMES.

"In the capability of and the impulse to the formation of Ideals we may discern the distinguishing essential mark of man."

OTTO PFLEIDERER.

"Wherefore be thou wise,
Cleave ever to the sunnier side of doubt,
And cling to Faith beyond the forms of Faith."

TENNYSON.

THE general spirit of Mr. Balfour's Theism is that of the earlier Gifford Lecturer, Professor A. Campbell Fraser. We may pass from the one writer to the other, therefore, without jolt or jar. The two have much in common. Both regard the universe as interpretable only in the light of the conception of God; both lay the chief stress on

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man's ethical nature; and both emphatically insist on the need of faith alike for science and for religion. But, while Mr. Balfour's standpoint may not unfairly be described as that of reflective common sense, Campbell Fraser's is characteristically an elaborate and sustained philosophical interpretation of Theism. It is philosophy inspired from two great sources—the Scottish philosophy (sane and measured in the hands of Thomas Reid), whose tradition Fraser inherited through Hamilton; and the more pronouncedly idealistic philosophy of Berkeley, of which Fraser made a devoted study for many years of his life, and which he illustrated brilliantly as the Editor of Berkeley's works, and became the recognized authoritative expounder of Berkeley's thought for more than a generation.

There are three doctrines in Fraser's Gifford Lectures, *The Philosophy of Theism* (delivered before the University of Edinburgh in 1894-95 and 1895-96), that between them give the gist of his theistic teaching, and which serve well to show the trend of Gifford philosophical speculation in one of its phases on the spiritualistic plane. These are his doctrine of the Human Self, his doctrine of Nature, and his doctrine of the function and importance of Faith in Theistic belief.

I.

The title of one of his lectures as originally delivered is "*Man Supernatural*."¹ That is but a striking way of expressing what we usually denominate man's native dignity and worth, or what is called, in Scripture language, Man made in the Image of God, with dominion over the brute creation and "over all the earth"—nature itself, and not only animate nature, being put under his sway. The Scripture phrase certainly serves to make explicit man's authority in relation to the lower animals and his wonderful power of transforming nature by his industry and art, of utilizing physical objects and forces and bending them to his will, coercing them to realize his purposes and minister to his wants, thereby yoking Nature to the car of Spirit; but the philosophical phrase is perhaps the better adapted to bring out what is here specially intended—man's intellectual and moral supremacy, and his ability in part to understand the universe and within measure to solve its riddle.

Man's Supremacy, then, disclosing his supernatural character, consists in his being a spiritual ego, a living person, endowed with Reason, and

¹ Replaced in the one-volumed second edition by *Ideal Man an Image of God*.

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gifted with an ethical nature, rendering him moral and responsible and, therefore, a freewill agent, moved by a sense of duty and by aspirations and visions of higher things. Moreover, he is master of Nature, not only because he can understand it and so far turn it to his purposes, but also because he can deliberately shape his life and build up his character in a way that would be impossible if there were nothing but Nature in the process.

The meaning of this is, that man, though in one respect a part of the material world, is greater than matter; he is a *living* being, and the fact of life introduces something over and above the mechanical principles that are sufficient to explain the world of matter; he is a *spiritual* being, and, therefore, possesses originative power of will—a real *agent*, not limited in his efficiency by mere physical causation.

The importance of this I wish to accentuate. The realm that is peculiar to man as rational is a realm included in two other realms—the physical world and the world of life and living beings. It must not be absolutely separated from these two, or conceived as diametrically opposed to either of them; for we know nothing of life apart from the material world in which it appears and through the material body which it renders efficient as a sentient

organism, nor of consciousness and mind apart from the living body through which they are manifested. The cosmos is indeed to be taken as a unity, and the fact must not be lost sight of; but matter does not constitute the whole of being. If there is mechanism, there is also vitalism. What vitalism counts for, we have already seen;¹ but the argument is *a fortiori*. If vitalism introduces a superior force, much more do consciousness and mind. Consciousness is not matter, though manifested by means of it: it is not a mere "epiphenomenon," as Huxley maintained, or "a function of the brain" (unspeakably marvellous though the brain as the chief organ of mind is). It has been found impossible by psychology to resolve consciousness into mere nerve tremors. The two are intimately related, but cannot be identified. Even Herbert Spencer, who has carried cerebro-psychology to its limit, declares, regarding the two modes of being that we distinguish as subject and object, that "so far from helping us to think of them as of one kind, analysis serves but to render more manifest the impossibility of finding for them a common concept—a thought under which they can be united"; and, while objecting to be classed either as a materialist or as a spiritualist, he ranges himself with the latter rather than with

¹ Lecture II.

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the former, if a choice between the two were actually thrust upon him. "Were we compelled," he says, "to choose between the alternatives of translating mental phenomena into physical phenomena, or of translating physical phenomena into mental phenomena, the latter alternative would seem the more acceptable of the two," for "it seems easier to translate so-called Matter into so-called Spirit, than to translate so-called Spirit into so-called Matter (which latter is, indeed, wholly impossible)."¹ And Huxley said: "We class sensations along with emotions, and volitions, and thoughts, under the common head of *states of consciousness*. But what consciousness is, we know not; and how it is that anything so remarkable as a state of consciousness comes about as the result of irritating nervous tissue, is just as unaccountable as the appearance of the Djinn when Aladdin rubbed his lamp, or any other ultimate fact of nature."² Consciousness is *sui generis*, and must be accepted as such. It *does* something, and not merely attends nerve action as a useless companion, as may be seen in such a familiar process as the formation of habit. What comes to be to us a habit (seen, for instance, in walking) begins, and only can begin, in the blaze of consciousness; and it is only when

¹ *The Principles of Psychology*, §§ 62, 63, vol. i. pp. 157-158.

² *Physiography*, viii. 210.

frequent repetition has produced facility and ease in doing what we are acquiring—has rendered the habit stable and self-supporting—that consciousness retires into the background; but, even then, it is never wholly beyond our recall (so it would appear), if its aid be needed and invoked.

But this that holds in the case of habit-forming, holds no less strictly in the case of the higher conceptual thought, which involves the more complex processes of mind—such as abstraction, the creative imagination, judging, and the elaborating of trains of reasoning. Not one of these is explicable by purely mechanical principles, because each presupposes the original activity of the mind and its efficiency as the conscious subject. But if this be so with life and thought, it is even more conspicuous in our ethical activity, where the conscious spontaneity of our being is felt to be effective in a way that commands and controls the merely mechanical and issues from a source where free agency and originating power are found. It is here more especially that we come to feel that we are fellow-workers with God in the realization of the Divine purpose for the universe. We are in measure creators (for freedom is creation): we can and do, though not single-handed, work out our own destiny.

This line of argument, thus extolling man's

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place in the universe, has been called by Bain "pandering to human vanity," and he ascribes to it very largely the deadlock in metaphysics, raised in connexion with ethics, regarding Freedom *versus* Necessity in the problem of the will. Neither of these terms "Freedom" and "Necessity" does he regard as adequate to express the situation; but the doctrine of Free-will, he argues, is the favourite dogma "as being most consonant to the dignity of man," and, although the weight of the reasoning is, in his estimation, "in favour of necessity," yet the word Necessity "carries with it a seeming affront, and hardly any amount of argument will reconcile men to indignity."¹

This criticism would, indeed, be valid if man's sense of native dignity as a free being were mere baseless self-conceit and a reckless claim to absolute self-sufficiency, and if, further, it were not essentially allied with his wants and aspirations after moral progress—with the vision of something higher and better in his own actual life and character, to which he may attain by constant effort, prompted by love of the Ideal and "moving about in worlds not realized." To judge the matter properly, we must take a man in his ideal aspect and not in his individual weaknesses and imperfections—great

¹ *Practical Essays*, p. 32.

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and striking and disheartening though these may often be. The test is not what any man actually is, but what he is meant to be and may become ; and what he may become he has it in his power to realize, because he is a self-determining being, choosing freely, prompted by the higher impulses of his nature and directed by intelligent purpose. Man is thus supreme among the denizens of earth inasmuch as he moves in the realm of ideals and consciously bases his life on the deliberate acceptance of definite principles, with a view to progress and ever higher progress. Consideration for the future, as well as experience of the present and the past, affects him, and he is stimulated to pursue his ends by the vision of ultimate attainment. Therein consists his native "dignity."

The corrective to an overweening sense of man's dignity is found in the fact and consciousness of his finitude. He is limited in his intellectual faculty and in his ethical attainments: he is not self-sufficient. He occupies a place intermediate (as Campbell Fraser is fond of expressing it) between nescience and omniscience: he cannot be wholly ignorant and he cannot be all-knowing. He alone is all-knowing who occupies the centre of the universe, and man's views are merely partial. Difficulties, then, must arise to him; problems and puzzles must present themselves that are by

him insoluble; there must be mysteries to a non-omniscient being. Goethe said wisely: "Man is not born to solve the problem of the universe, but to find out where the problem begins and then to restrain himself within the limits of the comprehensible."¹ But man's knowledge, though imperfect, is yet, within its measure, true and reliable. What his finitude impresses on him is the need of patience under a partial intellectual solution of the world's mystery, and the necessity of refusing to dogmatically affirm that two seemingly contradictory things involved in a belief are irreconcilable in reality. Fraser adduces the instance (which very greatly interested him) of the impossibility on man's part of solving the mystery of physical causation. This case implicates the conception of an infinite regress of caused causes; but, on the other hand, we have man's free will, which implicates self-determination or creative personal agency. These two seem incompatible. Yet the very fact of the incompleteness of man's knowledge, the very finitude of his nature, forbids his asserting that universal causation in physical nature and free will in moral deliberate choice are real contradictions—that they are absolutely incompatible and cannot meet in a higher or Divine intelligence, in God. "Cosmic faith and moral faith," he says,

¹ *Conversations with Eckermann*, i. 272.

"are both alike concerned with what is incompletely intelligible—mysterious under the limiting conditions of man's embodied reason: neither can be proved to be incapable of reconciliation in a higher than human intelligence. Faith in physical necessity need not subvert faith in what is higher than physical necessity—yet not *proved* to be inconsistent with physical order, and the assumption at the foundation of natural science."¹

With Campbell Fraser's view of man's place in the world, as thus outlined, I am in general accord; but I do not regard his argument as complete. In the first place, while he lays stress on man's intellectual ability to understand and to interpret nature to an appreciable extent, he does not make enough of man's ability to turn nature to his own uses, implying his power of inventions for practical ends: and this notwithstanding that, in the second and largely rewritten edition of the Lectures, he replaced the title of his original lecture on "Man Supernatural" by the distinctively Scriptural phrase "Ideal Man an Image of God." The Scripture conception is, that man has conferred on him by God authority over inanimate nature as well as over all lower living creatures, and that in the exercise of this "dominion" he is testifying to the existence of God as the Creator of the world

¹ *Philosophy of Theism*, 2nd (one-volumed) edition, 145.

and the Source of all human capacities and powers—his authority is deputed. In the second place, his conception of man's freedom of the will is too restricted. No doubt, he is only following well-known authorities (such as Cicero, Kant, Hamilton onwards) in confining man's specific freedom to *moral* freedom; but surely our ordinary volitional activity in selective Attention, for example, issues from a personal and free agent and forms a distinct contrast to anything that is found in organic matter. It is, perhaps, this too narrow notion of volitional freedom that makes Fraser write sometimes as though the supernatural in man was to be found only in his ethical nature. "Personally originated volition," he says in one place, "under obligation of duty,—necessarily involved in moral responsibility,—is that in man which I call supernatural."¹ If this were all, what of man's *cognitive* nature and his ability to *understand*? Is there no freedom there? If it were only "personally originated volition under obligation of duty" that is free, our cognitive or intellectual nature would certainly not get its due. It is only when we keep firm hold of the full meaning of man's mind as something essentially active and free, that we can perceive how vastly more important for Theism *human* nature is than *physical* nature. Next, one seeks in

¹ *Philosophy of Theism*, p. 151.

vain in this handling of the theme for any strong appreciation of the importance for theism of the outstanding human emotions—æsthetic, altruistic, or social; which is all the more surprising as Fraser's ultimate conception of God is that of Love, or the Universal Goodness. Our emotions, being an integral part of our nature, have as clear a right to manifest ultimate Reality to us as intellect or reason, and there revelation is emphatic.

Lastly, much more might be made in the interest of theism of the attractive and gently constraining power of the ethical ideal—a power that, unlike the mere sense of duty, works by love, and not by stern command (with threat implicit in it), and that, through its operation, ennobles the character of him who is drawn by it to higher and still higher attainments. The implication here is that the Ideal which thus constrains, and in constraining purifies and strengthens, is itself objectively realized—in other words, finds its embodiment and source in the Divinity. It is a wonderful power that which the ethical ideal exerts. It kindles in us, not the bare sense of obligation, but living aspiration; and, while showing us what we ought to be, still further shows us what we may become and what we are potentially. And the more we try to live it, the more we long after it in its completeness, and the more keenly conscious do we

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grow of our failure on earth to realize it fully. Yet all the while we are being raised and purified in character, and the conviction is being deepened within us that what we now are is but the earnest and the pledge of what we shall be hereafter.

II

We turn, next, to Nature.

To the man of Science, Nature is one thing ; to the philosopher it is quite another : but the two aspects are by no means incompatible. To the former it is the material world as the subject of careful and patient observation and experiment, with a view of ascertaining its structure and its laws, and, if possible, of extorting its secrets. It is the given something which he endeavours to understand, abstracted from consideration of the being and nature of himself, the inquirer. As inquirer, he is simply the impartial observer and recorder and, as far as may be, the interpreter ; but his own self is not under investigation. To the philosopher, on the other hand, the individual inquirer cannot thus be left out of account. If the philosopher be a psychologist, he makes his own self the supreme object of his study, and uses other selves, indirectly, to the extent that he can reach and understand them ; his own self, however, being taken as in immediate relation to the material

world and as holding intercourse with matter through a living organized body which is itself material. In other words, that which the man of science abstracts from—viz. his own self—is the very thing that the psychologist makes the special subject of his investigation. If, on the other hand, the inquirer be also a metaphysician, he starts with the psychologist's analysis and proceeds to speculate as to the mode in which the matter dealt with by science is related to the self of the investigator, and how it is possible for matter to be *known* by a thinking self-conscious subject, and what is the meaning, if any, that may be attached to "matter-in-itself" or reality as simple *being*. The material world now becomes a world of matter *in relation to conscious mind*; and the question confronts us, How is the fact that mind and matter meet in our sense-experience—or the fact that matter is not *alien* to mind—to be explained? Is it because mind is but a kind of matter; or is it because matter has its being and its signification only as expressive of mind? The second of these alternatives is that which Professor Fraser accepts; and thus Nature becomes to him a manifestation and revelation of the Divine Intelligence and Goodness. He expressed it by the phrase, "God latent in Nature."

From this view of it (essentially Berkeleyan)

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two things follow: First, it is possible for us to know and to interpret Nature because Nature is a *book* of God—is God speaking to men in a divine visual language, just as an author addresses his intelligent reader through the printed page: it is Intelligence communicating with intelligence. The visible universe, therefore, is made up of “sensible signs and not of operative causes.” Secondly, as Nature is an established system, characterized by constancy of sequences and coherence, it is in and through *order* that the God latent in Nature discloses Himself, so that Nature’s order is really *Providential* order. God is *immanent* (and, therefore, omnipresent), and not simply transcendent, constantly appealing to men (formed in His image) by the harmonious working of natural forces, thereby enabling men to trust the universal order and, in daily life, to lay their plans with confident expectations, which, when the moment of realization comes, are not, as a matter of fact, belied. God is found in nature’s uniformity, and not merely in unusual and extraordinary occurrences. And, indeed, in this connexion we may go farther than Fraser does and say that, if to the theist causation in physical nature, uniform and impeachable, is but the expression of the Divine Will—a Will guided by supreme infallible Intelligence and, therefore, self-consistent—the

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uniformity of Nature necessarily appears to us "mechanical."¹ Further still, the ordered character of Nature, the reign of law that we find there, is what makes this world such an effective training-ground for moral character.² Submission to general laws and guiding our conduct thereby is, as it has been put, "Schooling in obedience and forethought and a modest estimate of ourselves."

But, if all this be so, then "Nature is Supernature." The phrase may appear on the face of it a paradox; and so indeed it is in reality, if we insist on drawing a strict line of demarcation between Nature as totally exclusive of the supernatural and the supernatural as absolutely separated from Nature, having nothing in common with it. But if we discard this erroneous distinction begotten of too abstract thinking, and allow free intercourse between the two realms that we have illegitimately severed and opposed, it may convey a real and precious truth. It is nothing else than an arrestive way of putting the position that Nature is permeated by the Divine (and hence the possibility of a *science* of Nature) and in the Divine has its being and signification. A world

¹ See George John Romanes, *Thoughts on Religion*, p. 121.

² See Dr. Stanton, *The Elements of Pain and Conflict in Human Life*, p. 125.

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so constructed that men should not find God in it, except on rare occasions and in very peculiar circumstances, would bespeak a world of infinitely less grandeur and with far less meaning than that which is actually known by us in our experience—an ordered world whose uniformity we can rely on. This is no argument against the possibility of miracles, if “miracles” be properly conceived, but a protest against the blindness that will not see God save in miraculous “interferences” with the settled course of Nature, thereby playing into the hand of the deists. “Depend upon it,” says Martineau,¹ in very beautiful phrasing, “it is not the want of greater miracles, but of the soul to perceive such as are allowed us still, that makes us push all the sanctities into the far spaces we cannot reach. The devout feel that wherever God’s hand is, *there* is miracle; and it is simply an indevoutness which imagines that only where miracle is, can there be the real hand of God. The customs of Heaven ought surely to be more sacred in our eyes than its anomalies; the dear old ways, of which the Most High is never tired, than the strange things which He does not love well enough ever to repeat.” God is in us and around us, and, in the uniformities of Nature, is everywhere

¹ Quoted by William James in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 475.

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revealing Himself; and our vision of Him is blunted merely because we look for Him only in remote nooks and crannies of the earth and insist on "portents" and "wonders," whereas :

"If we could open and intend our Eye,
We all, like Moses, should espy
Even in a bush the radiant Deity."¹

From this standpoint, the conflict between science and religion, which so much perturbed people in the end of last century, is seen to rest on a false antithesis. "Religious thought and physically scientific thought about the universe, instead of destroying, really strengthen one another, in their recognition of continuous Divine activity, or endless creation under forms of natural order. For the natural order may be interpreted as a revelation of perfectly reasonable Will, with which man is constantly, if often only unconsciously, in intercourse—for good or evil, in proportion as his individual will tends to assimilation with the Will of God. Thunder is no longer the voice of an interfering God, because it is a startling phenomenon: it is a revelation of God, because it is recognized as an event that makes its appearance under divinely natural law in the orderly evolution—'For if He thunder by law, the thunder is yet His Voice.'"²

¹ Abraham Cowley.

² *Philosophy of Theism*, 2nd edition, pp. 198-199.

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The upshot of the argument is, that the revelation of the ultimate Reality that is made by the religious consciousness is supreme; and with that I fully agree. The doctrine that God's immanence is explanatory of natural existence strikes one of the most inspiring notes of modern theistic reasoning; only, we must interpret it liberally. God is present in the universe not only as Providence, but also as experient—entering into its strivings and more especially into the labour and energizing of men in their struggle with pain and suffering and especially with sin or moral evil. "In all their afflictions He is afflicted," for they are His co-workers; and human trials and anxieties cannot be indifferent to Him. This point will come before us again in another lecture.

III

We are now in a position to see what, according to Fraser, is the foundation of philosophical theism.

It is characteristic of him, in the maturity of his thinking, that he clearly perceives the full problem raised to man by life's experiences and does not shrink from facing it in its entirety. The continued future being of the human individual, as well as his present existence, engages his thoughts, and, while he wrestles with the intellectual problem of knowledge and the moral

problem of evil in the world, he has also his chastened meditation on Death and Immortality. This he designates, in the second edition of his Gifford Lectures, "The Final Venture of Theistic Faith." It is only the Final venture, however, for the whole of theistic faith is a venture; indeed, one may say, *all* faith is a venture; and faith, as living trust, on which we are prepared to act, is not confined to religion, but, like imagination, is equally indispensable for science, for progressive thought and knowledge, for the formation of character, for social progress, and for the practical exigencies of everyday life. The rule for great achievement is, Risk all to win all. And so, "if cosmic faith is the assurance that the material world will not in the end put to *intellectual* confusion those who rely on the universality of its natural order, this blended moral and religious faith not only guarantees the physical faith itself, but is the *absolute* assurance that the Supreme Power will not put to permanent *moral* confusion those who strive permanently to realize the ideals of truth and beauty and goodness; or who trust absolutely in infinite love, in and through which all things somehow work together for good to those who thus live. The God represented in the Ideal Man is thus for man the available revelation and guarantee of God or Goodness on the throne

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of the universe.”¹ Faith lies at the root of Theism, then; and theistic faith is not irrational. In a world where our knowledge is necessarily partial and our vision limited, where, from the very necessities of the case, we must grope our way at many points, it is perfectly legitimate to exercise faith—indeed, it is the only rational thing to do—if our minds are to expand and our natures to become purified. Stagnation alone is possible for the man who lacks faith and refuses to move because he is ever seeing a lion in the way. Many a door is opened to him who goes boldly up and knocks, which is kept closely shut against him whose timidity prevents him from moving forward and pins him to the spot.

And so, carrying forward the argument, even in the final venture of theistic faith regarding men's Destiny—regarding Death and Immortality—there is no abnegation of reason, for faith and reason are inextricably bound up together. Many considerations are urged by Fraser to show the reasonableness of faith in a conscious personal existence for men beyond the grave. Naturally, being a metaphysician, he placed his finger on *personal identity*,² the unity and

¹ *Philosophy of Theism*, 1st series, pp. 274-275. I prefer this to the somewhat altered wording of the second edition.

² Consult Lotze on this point, *Microcosmos*.

continuity of our conscious being on earth—the implicit conviction, implicating memory, that *I* who exist to-day am the same *I* who existed and acted in such-and-such a way yesterday and am responsible for the action. This personal identity remains permanent in the midst of all known changes many and great, whether of mental states or of the growth and decay of the human body or of outward material things, experienced by me in my lifetime. The old man identifies himself with his childhood; and, though outwardly he may be altered by the intervening time almost past recognition from the boy that existed years ago (like the transformation effected on Glaucus the Sea-God, dwelling in the depths of the sea, by his being encrusted by shells and seaweeds), he has no hesitation in pronouncing the two to be the same: the old man and the boy are one. Amid all shocks and transformations here, personal identity remains unimpaired. The presumption from this seems to be that what has continued one, while everything else has changed, will continue one when the final earthly change comes and the body dies.

There is also a certain weight attaching to the old metaphysical argument based on the conception of the soul as a simple substance and, therefore, indiscerptible and indissoluble. But

from this we can get only, as Fraser feels, "an abstract possibility" of survival after death. The most that Socrates could say in the touching conclusion of the *Phædo* was—"It came to me apart from demonstration, with a sort of natural likelihood and fitness." The surest philosophical ground of faith in immortality to Fraser is *Ethical*: "This continuance," he says, "seems foreshadowed by man's possessing ideas of the eternal and infinite, and by his moral power of making himself bad or good—of living during the embodied interval either in harmony or not with his true ideal, even under a distribution of happiness that often seems capricious";¹ and I may not be doing him an injustice (I am only developing his argument) if I put it thus, in my own way:

Human conscience and character have their vaticinations. And as character, which is of the highest moment for man, is only in this life in process of formation and never reaches perfection in any individual, as the ideal of holiness is far beyond the individual's actual attainment on earth, even in the case of the saintliest of men, and yet is the object longed for and aimed at and cherished, this seems to bespeak in no uncertain fashion a life beyond the grave when character shall be perfected and the yearnings of man's

¹ *Philosophy of Theism*, 1st edition, 2nd series, p. 247.

inward nature satisfied. The very object of our earthly life appears to be to test and to perfect us, and, as our allotted span of three-score years and ten is too short for the purpose, theistic faith posits a continuance of personal existence for our perfection, trusting to the righteousness and goodness of the Omnipotent Creative Power. Or, otherwise expressed, "Life would seem irrational save as a part of some larger existence, and the severity of its discipline unjust save as a training; the audacity of man's aspirations would be childish or outrageous save as a genuine though imperfect apprehension of actual realities, and his humility and sense of unworthiness unintelligible save as an education for other responsibilities and privileges."¹

Hence the value of the theistic standpoint in considering the present existence of physical evil (mental anguish and bodily pain) in the world. Illumination is found in the facts that there is "some soul of goodness in things evil"; that pain and human suffering serve a higher purpose of God, so that the ministry of pain is gracious, producing saints and heroes; that evil is an effective means of bracing men's minds and strengthening their characters, touching them to fine issues; and that "the highest types" have accepted Pain

¹ Mr. Stanley Arthur Cook in Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. x. p. 689 (art. "Religion").

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eagerly and willingly, finding in it "the grave but kindly teacher of immortal secrets, the conferrer of liberty, even the initiator into amazing joys."¹ The conclusion is, that evil as pain is a condition of progress in the case of a finite free-will agent like man, who is here preparing for a future life.

But the problem of *moral* evil or *sin*? That, I think, is best taken, more largely than Fraser takes it, from the standpoint that moral order in the world is something to be *evolved* and not simply something once for all imposed by some active Will from without. The possibility of moral evil now becomes apparent. A world that evolves strikes us as finer, more impressive, and more desirable than a world fully formed, or ready-made and complete, at the beginning. No doubt, moral progress through evolution implies temptations. But temptations are simply in themselves tests or trials, and may exercise a beneficent function, just as the fierce winds that blow on the oak benefit and strengthen it. If resisted, temptation means spiritual strength: robustness of character, like robustness of physical frame, is gained through surmounting difficulties, encountering barriers, transcending obstacles. But temptations may

¹ Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 21. This is admirably brought out by Dr. J. R. Illingworth, in his article on "The Problem of Pain: Its Bearing on Faith in God," in *Lux Mundi*.

bring lapses from rectitude and good. Yes, but what if these lapses be made the means of raising the erring individual to a higher plane—to a fuller, freer, and better life? Sin is then seen to be *conquered* at the very moment when it seemed to prevail. Conversion (to use the religious term) means elevation to a nobler sphere of living, and the rescue of a soul as “a brand from the burning.” Contemplation may show us the deeper significance of an evolving or growing universe over “a block universe,” as William James calls it; and the alternative really is between “evolving” (with all its possibilities and risks) and “block,” with its mechanical limitations and its cramping conditions of life. No recent writer has brought out this more clearly than Professor Ward in his Gifford Lectures on *The Realm of Ends; or, Pluralism and Theism*.¹

But, further, in reference to Campbell Fraser's reasons for faith in the immortality of the soul, I wish to point out what I regard as a real omission. I can understand his not making prominent the metaphysical argument from the substance of the soul. But I think there is vast significance in a metaphysical view that he has ignored, namely, the

¹ See p. 374, etc. See also Josiah Royce, *The World and the Individual*, i. 381, and ii. ; and see also book iv. of vol. ii. of Dr. James Martineau's *A Study of Religion*, on “The Life to Come.”

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view that the essence of the soul is *Life*. Now it is an old Platonic doctrine that Life and Death are incompatibles, and that, therefore, the thing whose essence is Life cannot die. That notion, it seems to me, is forceful, and it lies at the root of our Saviour's deep utterance that "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." God Himself is Life and the source of it, and, consequently, the Life that He has imparted to man, who is *made in His image*, is eternal as its Divine Source is eternal.¹

But, personally, I would go farther and draw an argument from the very conception of Death. Death as a terror to men is pronounced to be very much a spectre of the imagination—a "tragic mask," as the Greeks called it, capable only of frightening children. Yet, there is no question that mankind in general dread it, and designate it tremblingly "the King of terrors." Is this dread absolutely irrational? So thought the Stoics of old. They conceived men, in this respect, as under a great delusion. People are afraid of death, they taught, because they do not realize that what is the inevitable lot of every human being cannot be an evil. The universality of death, they said,

¹ Since these words were written, the significance of eternal or absolute value for belief in the immortality of the soul has been admirably brought out by Dean Inge in his *Outspoken Essays*.

clearly shows that death is necessary for the universe, and, as the universe is a system ordered and rational, whatever is necessary for it is good. So far, well. But let us go beyond the Stoics and interpret the fact from another and (I think) a higher standpoint—a standpoint which does not necessitate our charging the whole human race, of every age and clime, with irrationality and with being under delusion. Let us assume that the fear of death is rational and not irrational; and then what the practically universal fear of death testifies to is that death in itself is *alien* to men and that their natural and native element is Life. Thus conceived there may be a deeper meaning than even Spinoza himself saw, or than is usually supposed in the famous proposition¹—"A free man thinks of nothing less than of death, and his wisdom is not a meditation upon death but upon life."

Once again, it is rather surprising that, as the sole experience that man has of himself is that of "spirit incarnate in a physical organism," Fraser has nothing special to say, from the standpoint of philosophy, as to the permanent effect of this intimate and constant relation as regards the mode of man's future being. And so, I would insist that immortality must be viewed in connexion with

¹ *Ethica*, part iv. prop. 67.

man's body as well as with his soul. A man is not body alone or soul alone, but soul and body—a duality in unity, the attunement of two separate things making a harmony, like the singing of the lark in the heavens, which, as we listen to it or recall it to memory, is inevitably regarded by us as not simply song but the combination of melodious voice and fluttering wings. And the future life cannot be conceived as anything less than the perfection of the complete man (body and soul), towards which the present life is the indispensable aid.

If a man's soul then be immortal, must there not also be something imperishable corresponding to his body? The change that takes place on the soul at death must, in any conceivable view, be unspeakably great, and its future life cannot be a mere reproduction of its present life. May not the body, *stamped by the soul here and conditioning its activity*, be represented in some purified form hereafter, the suitable instrument and companion of the transformed soul?

The affirmative answer to this is neither contradicted by physical science nor in itself unphilosophical. It is compatible with physical science, for physical science shows that Nature is constantly tending to give to conditioned forces the possibility of their exercise, and the scientific

doctrines of the conservation of energy and continuity encourage the belief that both spiritual force and the great forces of Nature are indestructible. It is also philosophical, for philosophy dare not, save at its peril, ignore the sole experience that we have of ourselves—namely, *that of spirit incarnate in a physical organism*—and it must provide, in any conception of man's existence after death, for both sides of his being. This fact was clearly seen by the early Greek Christian thinkers, who, combining philosophy with theology, demanded what they called a resurrection of the body, interpreted not grossly (which involved an impossibility) but in the refined and lofty spiritual way in which St. Paul had done, in the name of reason and of justice.¹ They insisted on the point that the training which the body gets on earth through the controlling and guiding soul has meaning only if it points to a continued existence for the body, so that the future life for man signifies the perfection of the *complete* man (body and soul), and the present earthly life has for its end or purpose helping towards that perfection. This, too, seems to underlie the Pauline conception of a "spiritual" body—the body, that is, conceived as the necessary vehicle of the soul's self-experience. Anyhow,

¹ See, e.g., the Greek "Apologists" Athenagoras and Justin Martyr.

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there can be no question that purity of living makes great transformation on the body here, showing that the body need not be a mere hindrance but a help to the spirit's progress: as Browning puts it with sure insight:

"To man, propose this test—

Thy body at its best,

How far can that project thy soul on its lone way?

Let us not always say,

'Spite of this flesh to-day,

I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole!'

As the bird wings and sings,

Let us cry, 'All good things

Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps soul.'"¹

If that be so, then the mutual helpfulness of soul and body here—more especially if the body be viewed in New Testament fashion as "a temple of the Holy Ghost"—is the pledge and earnest of their mutual being and influence hereafter. The future life for man is for the *whole* man; and thereby is human personal identity conserved and the vista opened up for the chastened imagination to picture what it may regard as fitting environment for the continued development and progress of the individual man.

¹ *Rabbi Ben Ezra*. For a suggestive handling of the subject of Immortality in recent philosophy, see Professor Ward's *The Realm of Ends*, Lec. xviii., "Theories of a Future Life."

LECTURE V

THE PRINCIPLE OF VALUE, AND THE IDEA OF GOD: PROFESSOR A. SETH PRINGLE-PATTISON

"Philosophy, like life, must keep the doors and windows open."

WILLIAM JAMES.

"TTrue religion is rational : if it excludes reason, it is self-condemned. And reason without religion fails of its object ; since, if philosophy can find no place for religion, it cannot explain man."

AUBREY MOORE.

WITH great lucidity and rare expository skill, Professor A. Seth Pringle-Pattison works out his theistic argument from the standpoint of recent philosophy, in his Gifford Lectures on *The Idea of God*, delivered before the University of Aberdeen and published in 1917. The handling is searching and elaborate, and impresses one by the general cogency of the thought and the keenness of the insight ; and it is marked by a smoothness and felicity of diction that often rises to eloquence. It would be difficult to find a more striking example of the exact fitting of words to ideas, and of the even-flow of reasoning, aided,

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and not hindered, by abundant criticism of opposing views.

His philosophy is avowedly idealistic; and idealism as accepted by him is defined as "the doctrine of the self-conscious life as organic to the world or of the world as finding completion and expression in that life, so that the universe, as a complete or self-existent fact, is statable only in terms of mind."¹ Underlying this is the position that Nature or the world is not to be taken as a thing complete in itself exclusive of man regarded as something apart from and independent of it. Man and Nature form elements of a whole, and it is in the light of the whole, and not of either of its parts, that the universe is to be interpreted. From this standpoint he is able to controvert the various philosophies, or attempts at philosophical explanation, of the universe that assume the completeness of Nature, and its full adequacy to supply the necessary explanatory principles. Naturalism (in the Balfourian sense) comes under his criticism; so also do Positivism (both in its philosophical and in its theological aspect) and Agnosticism (more especially as represented by Herbert Spencer). But so also do certain forms of idealism itself (specially labelled "Mentalism")—such as Berkeley's subjective idealism; and

¹ *The Idea of God*, p. 190.

Panpsychism of various forms, including the Monadism of Leibniz. His position is, that neither must the external world become everything to us, nor must it be swamped in subjectivism. This gives to him a Theory of Knowledge which, while insisting on the necessity of paying due regard to the subject knowing, conserves objective reality. The fact that it is *we* who know reality is no valid reason for maintaining that, therefore, it is not reality that we know but simply our own "idea" of it. The real is given in the knowing; it is manifested or revealed in perception; only, it is revealed *in measure* and not *wholly*—its nature is not exhausted in what we can apprehend of it. From this standpoint, further, it is seen that the usual psychological distinction between primary and secondary qualities of matter has not ultimate philosophical significance. All qualities, whether primary or secondary (or secundo-primary, as Hamilton would add)—colour and sound no less than extension and solidity—have objective value: for "a ripe philosophy," as well as for common sense, "colours and sounds are not merely sensations or internal states; they are unmistakable predicates of the real."¹ In like manner, it is within experience that he finds the proper interpretation

¹ *The Idea of God*, pp. 121 and 212.

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of such contrasts as substance and attributes; noumenon and phenomenon,¹ and, above all, the meaning of the Absolute or God. "Certainly, apart from our actual experience, God or the Absolute is a subject waiting for predicates, an empty form waiting to be filled. But we need be at no loss for predicates: in the words of the Apostle, 'the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, *being understood by the things that are made*, even his eternal power and Godhead.' Where, indeed, should we gain a knowledge of God except from His manifestation?"²

All this is worked out with keen critical acumen in the first series of lectures, the text of which may be said to be "God as immanent—the Divine as revealed in the structure and system of finite experience"; and it may be taken as clearing the way for the second series which, although still in large measure critical (particularly incisive and sustained as against Professor Bosanquet's doctrine of the Absolute and the finite self), is more constructive and brings out distinctly the writer's own position.

The main stress in the argument is now laid on "the principle of value," which is definitely maintained to be the decisive factor in determining

¹ *The Idea of God*, p. 214.

² *Id.* p. 158.

theistic truth—the key, indeed, to the solution of life's problems. And the concluding lecture, dealing with "Pluralism—Evil and Suffering," gives a brief but clear statement of the author's own conception of God or the Absolute.

What, then, is the principle of value? In the first place, it is something that must be found in the nature of the system as a whole.¹ Judgments of value "are not to be taken, like the intuitions of an older philosophy, as so many detached and mutually independent pronouncements of one faculty or another upon particular features or aspects of the world. They represent rather so many parts of one fundamental judgment in which the nature of reality, as exhibited in the system, may be said to affirm itself. Every particular judgment depends for its ultimate sanction on the recognition of its object as a contributory element to this inclusive whole."² The meaning of this is that the estimate of any value is determined by the setting of its object—its relation to the other constituents of the whole and the end that it serves. In the next place, "our sense of value is not a matter of selfish preference or individual desire; the judgment of

¹ See also Professor Bosanquet, *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, Lectures 8 and 10.

² *The Idea of God*, p. 223.

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value is as impartial as it is unhesitating. . . . But in its pronouncements as to what possesses value and what does not—in its recognition of the main forms of value, and in its general scale of higher and lower—it represents an unswerving conviction which is, even *prima facie*, at least as important an element in the philosophical question as the scientific theories on which Naturalism builds, and which, if the scope of these theories be shown in a truer light, may well become of determining significance for our conception of ultimate reality. Idealism takes its stand on the essential truth of our judgments of value, and the impossibility of explaining the higher from the lower. Beauty and goodness are not born of the clash of atoms; they are effluences of something more perfect and more divine.”¹ Next, “it is from the ideals present and operative in man’s life that we draw our criterion of value and, at the same time, our conviction of the nature of the system in which we live.”² Lastly, the idea of value cannot legitimately be divorced from our experience—from our natural wants and our conception of purpose. “The importance of the idea of purpose and its correlate, satisfaction, is that they recall us to the aspects of feeling and will, which are incontestable marks of any real experience,

¹ *The Idea of God*, pp. 41-42.

² *Id.* p. 243.

and apart from which value is an unmeaning phrase." But "satisfaction means more than can be expressed in terms of pleasure and pain, considered merely as passive states of the soul. Satisfaction is inseparable from conation, and successful conation is the self-fulfilment of the creature. In its highest form, such conation means realized purpose, and the supreme values are those which represent the realization of our most sustained purposes and the satisfaction of our deepest and most permanent desires. Value, it is not too much to say, becomes an abstraction when dissociated from the idea of purpose and realization."¹

What of God, let us next inquire?—how is the Divinity to be conceived? In the first place, He is immanent, and not (in the ordinary sense of the term) transcendent. This needs to be explained. The explanation is found in consideration of what constitutes the essence of human nature. It is man's prerogative to guide his life, not only by the actual, but by the ideal. He will strive and agonize and even sacrifice himself in defence of principles or ideas that are dear to his heart—liberty, honour, justice, righteousness. He realizes the distinction between the "is" and the "ought to be," between the higher and the lower self,

¹ *The Idea of God*, pp. 334-335.

between actual attainment and possible perfection; and he is ever pushing on (though with many retrogressions and failures in the case of the individual) towards the transformation of the "is" into the "ought to be," or the ultimate realization of the perfection that captivates his desire. He aims at a higher and a better, a nobler and a purer, and cannot rest satisfied with present achievement. Now, what does this mean? It means that "the process of such a life is explicable only through the actual presence within it, or to it, of the Perfection to which it aspires." In other words, Perfection as ideal is not a mere fiction of the imagination, but the actual operation of the Divine in the human finite soul—the operation of a Power that is "closer to us than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet." The Divine regarded as "an inaccessible Beyond" would be ineffective. Whenever we conceive God as transcendent in the sense of being "inaccessible," we are treating Him and man as two independent facts, and, in so doing, "we lose our hold upon the experienced fact, which is *the existence of the one in the other and through the other*"—man in and through God and God in and through man. "God has no meaning to us out of relation to our own lives, or to spirits resembling ourselves in their finite grasp and infinite reach; and, in the

nature of the case, we have absolutely no grounds for positing his existence out of that reference."¹

√ This being so, it follows that the traditional idea of God must be "profoundly transformed." On the one hand, we must part with what still remains of the idea of God as a magnified Oriental potentate, living a life purely for self, acting arbitrarily and capriciously and using his subjects only as means to his own aggrandizement and glory; and, on the other hand, we must part with the more intellectual and refined conception of Him as the solitary self-centred Deity (such as Aristotle represented him to be), the source of the universe, indeed, but living outside of it, satisfied to realize eternal blessedness in an unbroken life of isolated thought or contemplation. In neither view do we get the Deity taking active sympathetic unselfish interest in His own creation, however much His creation may look up to and long for Him. But, further, we must get rid of the notion of God that is expressed in the popular theology of to-day. "Few things," he says, "are more disheartening to the philosophical student of religion than the way in which the implications of the [Christian] doctrine of the Incarnation are evaded in popular theology by dividing the

¹ *The Idea of God*, p. 254.

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functions of Deity between the Father and the Son, conceived practically as two distinct personalities or centres of consciousness, the Father perpetuating the old monarchical ideal and the incarnation of the Son being limited to a single historical individual. Grosser still, however, is the materialism which has succeeded in transforming the profound doctrine of the Spirit, as the ultimate expression of the unity and communion of God and man, into the notion of another distinct Being, a third centre of consciousness mysteriously united with the other two. The accidents of language have combined with the ingrained materialism of our ordinary thinking to make the doctrine of the Trinity a supra-rational mystery concerning the inner constitution of the transcendent Godhead, instead of the profoundest, and therefore the most intelligible, attempt to express the indwelling of God in man."¹

Having got rid of these inadequate conceptions, what is the idea of God that remains for our acceptance? It is practically that to which we are led by a consideration of the deep view of life that is presented in Christianity and realized in Christ—namely, that the highest life is not one of

¹ *The Idea of God*, pp. 409-410. On the other hand, see Dr. W. S. Bishop's article on "The Theology of the Holy Spirit," in *The Expositor* for April 1917.

unbroken individual self-centred pleasure, but one of self-sacrifice and disinterestedness, in which the true self is won by conflict and crucifixion. Applying this to the Ultimate Reality, what we find is—"no God, or Absolute, existing in solitary bliss and perfection, but a God who lives in the perpetual giving of Himself, who shares the life of His finite creatures, bearing in and with them the whole burden of their finitude, their sinful wanderings and sorrows, and the suffering without which they cannot be made perfect. And thus, for a metaphysic which has emancipated itself from physical categories, the ultimate conception of God is not that of a pre-existent Creator, but, as it is for religion, that of the eternal Redeemer of the world. This perpetual process is the very life of God, in which, besides the effort and the pain, He tastes, we must believe, the joy of victory won."¹

From all this it must be obvious that, in Professor Pringle-Pattison's latest contribution to theistic thinking, we have much valuable matter demanding close attention, and it is receiving such at the present moment. There is a vast deal of thought that is stimulating and suggestive and true, and not a little that is genuinely helpful. There are, however, some obscure points and some

¹ *The Idea of God*, pp. 411-412.

important omissions, to which I must now draw attention.

There is, first of all, a difficulty in regard to the relation of non-conscious Nature to self-conscious finite being. It is represented as a process of immanent development, in which Nature starts as something devoid of consciousness, but ultimately emerges as something possessing both feeling and rationality. "The idea of Nature as a completed system and of man as a spectator *ab extra*," we are told, "is essentially false. The intelligent being is rather to be regarded as the organ through which the universe beholds and enjoys itself," so that the goal to which Nature is working is "the development of an organ by which she may become conscious of herself and enter into the joy of her own being."¹ Professor Bosanquet, in like manner, speaks of "unitary perfection lying in the complete individuality of *the universe as a conscious being*, which is the ultimate value and standard of value."² Surely, this is to hypostatize or personalize an abstraction, and to confound what is really given in our conscious experience with an imagination. It is to take man's conscious rationality as we find it in ourselves as the equivalent of, or a synonym for, Nature's becoming

¹ *The Idea of God*, p. 211.

² *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 309. Italics mine.

conscious of herself and entering into the joy of her own being. That appears to me to be philosophy revelling in metaphorical language in a very perilous way—a way that, if fully pursued, would be disastrous to theism. That God as Supreme Reason should delight in man His offspring, and that man through his rationality should so far apprehend God (being “formed in His image,” as Scripture puts it) and become sharer in His joy is one thing ; but that this should mean nothing more than that Nature—designated “she” and, therefore, personified—should thus realize herself and enjoy herself is quite another. It looks suspiciously like explaining the higher by the lower, which, we have been told, idealism cannot tolerate.

Next, the doctrine of Value. This, as enunciated by Professor Pringle-Pattison, may be taken as substantially an acknowledgment of the exalted place of man in the cosmos, and the necessity (*legitimate*, as well as necessary) of trusting his faculties and ideals. Thus far he is on solid ground. Ideals are supremely precious to us: they are the condition of our spiritual progress and the means of revelation to us, and the source of courage and success in life's strenuous effort. There is, however, something unsatisfactory about the doctrine as set forth. For one thing, the conception of “value” is vague

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and tends to become individualistic, and seems to be compatible with philosophical views of very opposite character; and, moreover, it is apt to suggest barter and the market-place. The old philosophical term "worth," I think, is better. There is a dignity about *worth* which *value* lacks, rendered sacred by hoary philosophical usage, especially in the realm of ethics; and it connotes excellence, and points to the quality in the object that is the ground of its value rather than to the value itself. But, this apart, the doctrine of value is explicitly differentiated by Professor Pringle-Pattison from the intuitionism of the older philosophers by the circumstance that "judgments of value are not to be taken, like the intuitions of an older philosophy, as so many detached and mutually independent pronouncements of one faculty or another upon particular features or aspects of the world. They represent rather so many parts of one fundamental judgment in which the nature of reality, as exhibited in the system, may be said to affirm itself. Every particular judgment depends for its ultimate sanction on the recognition of its object as a contributory element to this inclusive whole."¹ Well, the question at once suggests itself, Have we such a full, accurate, and unerring knowledge of the

inclusive whole, and such a clear and constant vision of it, as to be able to form a complete and satisfactory scale of values, and to determine with precision and decisively the exact place of each? The answer can only be in the negative. Of the older intuitive philosophers (Thomas Reid, for instance) this at least may be said, that they did supply us with lists of first principles (of necessary and of contingent truth)—lists of what Dugald Stewart preferred to designate “fundamental laws of human belief” or “primary elements of human Reason”—on which they were themselves agreed, and for which they claimed the support of common sense or the general consent of mankind. But we look here in vain for anything so complete or precise as this; nor do we find agreement among prominent upholders of value-judgments themselves as to the estimate of a value at critical points—and this is the really disconcerting thing. An example of what I mean is found in the case of the final survival of the finite individual—a unique centre of consciousness—in the Absolute. Professor Pringle-Pattison holds (and, to my thinking, rightly) that the finite individual, being independent and unique, cannot ultimately be swamped in the Absolute, but must be conserved; but Professor Bosanquet, equally insistent on the

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principle of value, seems to maintain the contrary, that the conservation of independent finite beings does not obtain in Ultimate Reality. Surely, a principle of value that fails to decide as to the value of personality itself as determinative of a future life for the individual, at the point where authoritative decision is most required, leaves something to be desired. It would require to be supplemented by a vigorous application of the test of consequences, after the manner of the old experiential philosophers or of the more recent pragmatists; and it is necessary also to determine what relation value-judgments bear to emotions and volitions, for, if man is "a unique centre of consciousness," he is a unique centre of feeling, and of will, as well as of intellection or reason. Desire plays its part in appreciation of value, and must be counted with.

Next, let us take the conception of God. With Professor Pringle-Pattison's strenuous insistence on the immanence of God, if God be not taken simply as the conscious universe, or as an impersonal principle operating in the universe, I am at one. It is scarcely possible to over-emphasize the importance and necessity of always remembering that God is ever-present, ever-operative in the world—guiding all, informing all, sustaining all. All that is involved in the ordinary religious terms,

“Providence,” “Overruling providence,” “Governor of the world,” “Preserver,” and “Sustainer,” here finds recognition, and the further fact that He is not far from any one of us, but that in Him we live and move and have our being. There is also involved the fact that the work of redemption in the world is not yet complete, but is in process of accomplishment. But, while all this is very true, there is certainly a marked omission in the teaching in the lack of a full recognition of God’s transcendence. By all means, let us get rid of the conception of the Divine Power as a great Oriental despot, self-centred and irresponsible ; by all means, let us go beyond the conception of God as existing aloof from the world as the great Solitary Thinker, the Being of beings to whom contemplation is everything and the life of contemplation the supreme bliss. Transcendence in this sense is to be rejected because it separates the Creator from His creatures, and renders Him inaccessible, even when (as with Aristotle’s Deity)¹ He may stimulate desire for Himself in the world that is derived from Him (as the beloved one attracts to himself the lover). By all means, further, I would add, let us discard the conception of God as a being so utterly distant from His creatures that there can be no communication between them and

¹ See *Metaphysics*, xii. 7. 1072b, 4 ; also 9. 1074b, 15-30.

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Him except through a long line of intermediaries. Transcendence in each of these meanings may well be disowned. But in transcendence, rightly defined, there is involved the conception of *ultimate efficient cause and source*—God, if in the universe, is greater than the universe, which is derived from Him; and that conception cannot be eliminated from our idea of the Supreme. And this means (besides other things) Sovereignty; and, although we have discarded the idea of an irresponsible Eastern despot from the connotation of Sovereign, we cannot discard that of supremacy and righteous governance: even if we are fully to appreciate God as Providence, we must raise our eyes and see Him “sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up.” The theist cannot be satisfied with an Absolute that simply *evolves* and does not *create*. God’s Sovereignty is one of the greatest and most precious truths that we possess: it is inseparable from His Fatherhood; and, if properly interpreted, it would serve to explain many an enigma of life—especially the fact of the punishment of sin in the world, unremitted even to the forgiven penitent, and the significance of the horrors of the recent war, when the judgments of God were abroad on the earth—a call to loyalty higher than that of patriotism. Sin is nothing if it be not a transgression against a *personal* Being, who is the

Sovereign Power of the universe; and punishment (of individuals and of nations) may be the clearest evidence of a Sovereign Father's heart.

Not accentuating this view, Professor Pringle-Pattison is necessarily to me unsatisfactory in his handling of the two great questions (essential to Theism) of the *Personality* of God and the *personal Immortality* of man. He is hampered, in the case of the former, by his use of the ambiguous term "the Absolute" (a vague word indeed, judging by the great diversity of its uses in the history of philosophy) as an occasional synonym for "God," and by his hesitancy between the philosophical and the religious attitude towards the Absolute, involving a timidity or dislike to dwell upon, or even to do more than hint at, God as Self or Person; and, with regard to the latter, although he admits, when arguing with Professor Bosanquet, that finite "centres of consciousness," each "a unique whole of content,"¹ must remain independent in the Absolute, he can only say that personal immortality is not, as the history of the race abundantly shows, "an absolute necessity, in the sense that without it the world becomes a sheer irrationality."² True; but, if personality lies at the basis of value, or even if it be

¹ *The Idea of God*, Lec. xiv.

² *Id.* p. 45.

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inseparably connected with it, "the principle of value," which has dominated our thought, suffers if personal immortality be not distinctly affirmed. The conviction of personal immortality is not grounded on private hopes or fears, or on the mere selfish wish of the individual, but on the rational perception of the meaning and significance of personality. If anything has absolute value, it is personality, which man shares with God the Eternal, and has immortality thereby secured to him.¹

Next, let us turn to Professor Pringle-Pattison's objection to the theological doctrine of the Trinity. It is strongly and even startlingly worded. Indeed, such terms as "disheartening," "grosser still," and "materialism" are applied to it; and it is rejected on the ground that it aims at representing "a supra-rational mystery concerning the inner constitution of the transcendent Godhead, instead of the profoundest, and therefore the most intelligible, attempt to express the indwelling of God in man." But God's "indwelling in man" does not fully express our conception of the Deity: it gives only *immanence*, and *transcendence* is required as well. Immanence and transcendence are correlatives,

¹ There is an interesting critique of Professor Pringle-Pattison's view of God by Dean Rashdall, under the heading, "The Religious Philosophy of Professor Pringle-Pattison," in *Mind* for July 1918 (N.S. vol. xxvii. No. 107, pp. 261-283).

given in an indivisible experience, and neither having meaning without reference (implicit or explicit) to the other. There is required also the idea of *Personality*, if the Supreme is to mean anything effective for us at all: an impersonal God, or a mere intellectual "principle," cannot meet the requirements of the case. Hence the value of the theological dogma of the Trinity—which appears to me to be the entire opposite of "materialistic." In the first place, it is a formula combining the transcendence with the immanence of God, thereby securing that neither shall be ignored. It virtually says: The Creator of the world is necessarily greater than the world and yet, as its constant Sustainer and Righteous Governor is ever-present in it, and, through the operation of His Spirit, is ever producing and directing its development, not least in the re-creation and regeneration of sinful men.¹ In the next place, it is a philosophical attempt to surmount the representation of God either (*a*) as the Absolute Subject, with no "Other" set over against Him as Object—a mere abstraction, impossible in Reality;² or (*b*) as a distant solitary Being engaged from all eternity in contemplating

¹ Cf. Aubrey Moore's Essay on "The Christian Doctrine of God," in *Lux Mundi*, pp. 57-109.

² For the impossibility of an Absolute Subject, see Professor James Ward, *The Realm of Ends, or Pluralism and Theism*, p. 40.

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Himself and satisfied with His own glory ; and to express in formal intellectual fashion *the essentially social nature of the Godhead*—unity in diversity—in terms of conscious being, with personality as the differentiating fact. From which conception, by the very impulsion of logic, men have come to see, and Christianity has enshrined it, that the essence of God is Love ; for Love is by its very nature *social*—a relation between *persons* ; and if God be a Person, He cannot be a mere individual *per se*—an “individual *per se*” is solely a fiction of the imagination, impossible in fact. It is not so *only now* ; it has *always* been so : an absolutely solitary Deity never was, and never could be. Love must go out of itself and find its object, for it is not mere emotion, but an active living principle ; and the doctrine of the Triune God is the impressive theological way of expressing this.

Love is social, and as Divine Love towards man, it means self-sacrifice and help to the erring and the weak ; from which arises the idea of God as Redeemer of the world, as “Love that will not let us go,” seeking and saving that which is lost, sharing men’s experiences, entering into their joys and sorrows, battling with their temptations, pouring out on them His goodness, strengthening them by His sympathy, drawing them to Himself in infinitely diverse ways in closest ethical fellow-

ship and communion, not as slaves but as sons, members of a family whose supreme happiness is consciousness of filial relationship to the great Source and Author of their being.

But shall we go farther and say that, as the redemption of the world is only working itself out, and men are learning and progressing towards perfection gradually under life's experiences, God is also Himself learning and evolving as time goes on? That view has been held, associated with the conception of "a finite God." But a God who is Himself learning—emerging, therefore, from a state of ignorance to a state of knowledge, or from a lower to a higher level of character—as time goes on, cannot be accepted as adequate by the theist, who necessarily regards God as the all-good, all-wise, and omniscient Author of the universe, who, being omnipresent, is shaping it through evolution towards the perfection that He Himself (the omniscient) designed. If God *is*, a time-evolving perfection must simply be subservient to His purpose, and the evolution must itself be included in the purpose. A Creator God who is Himself being created as the world process advances is not satisfying. What is created is not God but the evolution of the process that we know as Providence, and this evolution is effected in part through the instrumentality of men (unique centres

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of consciousness) as co-workers with God. But the fact of the progress of the Divine plan towards fuller actual realization as time proceeds changes the aspect of the Divine intuition of the time-process, and, we may suppose, affects the Deity Himself with ever-renewed sympathy for the human labours, hardships, and sufferings that are conducing towards the progress and have drawn forth the Divine aid to the conscious aspiring and travailing souls.

LECTURE VI

THEISTIC ADVANCE, AND A RETROGRESSION

“All wisdom is a Divine Gift.”—CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS.

“Whoever wishes to see God must first himself become god-like (*θεοειδής*).”—PLOTINUS.

“Fecisti nos ad te, Domine ; et inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in te.”—ST. AUGUSTINE.

“The most living thought becomes frigid in the formula that expresses it.”—HENRI BERGSON.

I

IT is a significant fact that, according to anthropological and historical investigations, man's early interpretation of the universe was of a theological kind: it was the recognition of the world as full of gods, and, therefore, as permeated by the Divine presence. Whatever we may think of Auguste Comte's three stages (the theological, the metaphysical, and the positive) as explanatory of the actual development of human thought in its endeavour to comprehend and explain existence, there can be little question, I think, that he rightly

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began with the theological. The mystery of the universe early impresses us, and we interpret it in terms of the relationship of person to persons. We know, further, that the great historical cosmologies or philosophical attempts to solve the riddle of the universe (as we see strikingly exemplified in the evolution of Greek thought) were subsequent to and arose out of Theogonies (Homer and Hesiod preceded Xenophanes, Plato, and Aristotle): recognition of gods as a hierarchy came before scientific and rational explanation. This is very noteworthy. But not less noteworthy is it that the deeper thought of to-day has come back to the acknowledgment of the value of the religious consciousness as a revealer of Ultimate Reality. Now, developed religious thought is essentially personal, and a personal God alone, it seems to me, can meet the needs of the human heart and mind. To get even the acknowledgment from philosophy that religion has distinct philosophical value is something gained; and much more is gained when it is seen that, as religion is a personal relationship of the individual with the Object of his devotion, personality must enter somehow into the conception of God, and Theism is thereby justified.

I mention this specially because time was, and not so very long ago (the sixties and seventies of

last century), when, in our own land at any rate, philosophers as a rule rather scornfully dismissed religion: they regarded it as outside their notice, if not beneath it—it was to them either superstition or poetry. But now it has come to be felt that, if Ultimate Reality is to be found, the part that religion plays in the disclosure of it is of the utmost importance, and that, if philosophy is to fulfil its function, it must take account of and explain, as best it may, all sides of human experience. This recently awakened philosophic interest in religion was due in no small measure to the continued insistence and unwonted vigour (intellectual and stylistic) of William James. He never tired, in his later years, of driving home the fact of the firm hold that religion has, and has had, on mankind—of the variety of its forms and manifestations, and of its lasting and obviously salutary effects on the believer; and, in view of some of its phenomena, he insisted that “there are sources in us that naturalism with its literal and legal virtues never reckons of, possibilities that take our breath away, of another kind of happiness and power, based on giving up our own will and letting something higher work for us, and these seem to show a world wider than either physics or philistine ethics can imagine.”¹ In general, he emphatically

¹ *A Pluralistic World*, p. 305.

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maintained that "by being religious we establish ourselves in possession of ultimate reality at the very points at which reality is given us to guard."¹

The result is that scarcely a book of any importance in philosophy now issues from the press that does not contain a handling (fuller or briefer) of the philosophical significance of religion; and, further, a new department of religious study has been created, claiming to be both scientific and philosophic, and designating itself "The Psychology of Religion."

This awakened interest has served to bring out with clearness some points of advance in Theistic thinking.

For one thing, we have now got rid of the bogey of Anthropomorphism. That bugbear haunted and tormented the thinker of the past in a very persistent fashion. He (the thinker), a *man* (anthropos), was terrified by his own "manness," by his human qualities and characteristics, and tried in all conceivable distorted fashions to abjure it. The sarcasm of Xenophanes was brought to bear on it in days of old ("if oxen and horses or lions had hands, and could paint with their hands, and produce works of art as men do, horses would paint the forms of the gods like horses, and oxen like oxen, and make their bodies in the image of

¹ *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 500.

their several kinds"¹); and, at a later date, the most intellectual of the pantheists, Spinoza, suiting the illustration to his own mathematical inclinations, affirmed, "I believe that a triangle, if it could speak, would in like manner say that God is eminently triangular (*eminenter triangularem*), and a circle that the Divine nature is in an eminent manner circular (*eminenti ratione circularem*); and thus should every one ascribe his own attributes to God, and make himself like God, counting everything else as misshapen."² The argument lacks in cogency. For it represents the ox and the horse and the lion, and the hypothetical triangle and circle, as so far in possession of Intelligence or Thought as to be able to form the Deity in their own likeness: it even supposes the triangle and the circle to be able to appreciate the Scholastic and Cartesian distinction between existing *eminently* (*eminenter*) and existing *formally* (*formaliter*). But, if they possessed thought to that extent, or even if they possessed thought at all, they could not rest in conscious error. For possession of thought implies also possession of the power of rectifying and correcting the errors into which their mistaken use of thought might lead them: in other words, there is in thought itself (as the

¹ See Clemens Alexandrinus, *Stromateis*, v. 601c.

² *Epistolæ*, 60 (in Bruder's Collection).

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Cartesians taught) a criterion of truth. An intelligent triangle or circle, or an intelligent ox or horse, *just because it is intelligent*, would be able to perceive or to surmise or (in process of time) to discover in what sense or to what extent its own characteristics were applicable to God: its possession of intelligence would save it.

Once the fear of Anthropomorphism was got rid of, it was inevitable that thinkers should refuse to rest in mere negations and should be driven on to very positive and definite conclusions as to the extent of the revelation of God to man. If man can *know* God, the question involuntarily arises, Is knowledge all? Is there no access to Him through other channels of human nature than the intellect? Has the conative side of our being no function to discharge in the matter? Are human emotions and aspirations without significance. What of man's ideals? And so, from a fresh analysis of human nature and a more complete survey of psychology, a wider theistic outlook has become possible and is now generally taken; and, to those of us who have for years insisted on basing the conviction of God on ideal human nature in its entirety, there is nothing more gratifying than this. It has been effected by bringing the will and the emotions, as well as the understanding, to bear on the theistic conception.

Hence, with disappearance of the general terror of anthropomorphism has largely disappeared also that disquieting feeling produced by Agnosticism a generation ago. Materialism (with its mechanical theory stretched beyond workable limits) and dogmatic Naturalism (with its over-insistence on causal connexion) have waned or become innocuous. The persistent criticism of Mr. Arthur Balfour,¹ Professor James Ward,² and Professor Flint³ have sufficiently exposed what is inadequate or unsubstantial in them. The lighter agnostic position of Huxley⁴ (always pleasing to read about in his own lively writings) now possesses little more than an historical and literary interest. And the philosophic scepticism based on a mistaken view of the Relativity of Knowledge and issuing in Herbert Spencer's "Unknowable" has largely ceased to trouble.⁵ Defensive work of an effective kind has been done all along the line, and stimulus has been given to further theistic advance.

But in no respect, perhaps, is the advance more marked than in the just appreciation that has been reached of the nature of Personality, and the general recognition of its unique value in theistic

¹ See his *Foundations of Belief*.

² See his *Naturalism and Agnosticism*.

³ See his Croall Lectures on *Agnosticism*.

⁴ See my *Theism as Grounded in Human Nature*.

⁵ *Id.* Lec. iv.

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argument.¹ How but in personality can we get the ethical characteristics (so prominent in the conception of God) of "Holiness" and "Justice"? And, as to *knowledge*, everything depends upon a just analysis and true estimate of the human Self or Ego; for, if one's metaphysics depends on one's Theory of Knowledge, one's theory of knowledge in turn depends on one's idea or conception of the knower. It is on the conception of the intrinsic worth of rational personality that philosophy in the present day is disposed to find the chief ground of man's immortality. On this account the conception of an Absolute that is out of all relation to the finite is now generally pronounced to be unmeaning. But much more than this has been effected. Twenty-six years ago² reflective people in our land were not a little staggered by the doctrine of the Absolute as laid down by Mr. F. H. Bradley in his *Appearance and Reality*. Even when first published, that doctrine seemed to many untenable, notwithstanding the subtle intellectual and polemical ability shown in the presentation of it. It was felt to be one-sided—too intellectualistic and abstract, too far removed from concrete reality, ignoring non-intellectual elements of our experience,

Theism as Grounded in Human Nature, Lec. vi.; also Mr. Clement C. J. Webb's Gifford Lectures at Aberdeen on *God and Personality*.

² Written in 1919.

and even when judged intellectually, not free from ambiguity and inconsistency in the statement of it. On these lines it was at once attacked, and, since that time, Mr. Bradley has been compelled, under criticism no less vehement and incisive than his own (need I mention, for instance, that of William James?), to modify greatly the statement of his views—so much so that the original character of his doctrine is with difficulty recognizable in his more recent utterances. At any rate, an Absolute that is simply “the whole,” all-inclusive, seems too mechanical a notion to be completely satisfactory. It suggests a great all-containing receptacle, whose elemental contents, like so many liquids, each finds its own place among the others according to its specific gravity. A “whole” of that stamp certainly does not give the true idea of God, the Divine Spirit, Who is neither the whole nor the parts, but the Great Being to Whom both whole and parts owe their existence, and in Whom finite spiritual personalities are each *unique*, in the sense that each as individual is a permanent centre of consciousness distinct from every other and self-determined, but whose uniqueness, nevertheless, is differentiated from that of the Supreme. *Theirs* is dependent and derived; *His* is independent, underived, and the origin and source of theirs. The Unity here *pervades* the parts and cannot with

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any exactness be said to *enclose* them: it is mirrored in each of them, and is a universal presence.

A welcome modification of the doctrine of the Absolute was made by Josiah Royce, in his Gifford Lectures on *The World and the Individual*, delivered before the University of Aberdeen in the years 1899 and 1900. Personality and conscious Individuality, and social life, were requisitioned by him in the interests of the Absolute, and used to give it a warmth of content that took off the hardness and harshness of the mere logical intellectualism of Mr. Bradley; and, inasmuch as it is admitted that "in the Absolute, all finite individual lives, wills, meanings are consciously recognized, fulfilled, and justly expressed, precisely as they deserve to be," the Absolute, thus concretely apprehended and presented in a glowing rhetoric, was made interesting and attractive. Towards this result the personality of the writer himself has no doubt contributed. No one could come into intimate contact with Royce without feeling the charm of his affectionate and sympathetic nature, the extraordinary variety and width of his knowledge, the distinctively religious cast of his disposition, the clearness of his spiritual insight, his single-minded regard for Truth, and his power of felicitous expression of his convictions. All this

tells in his handling of philosophy, and makes itself felt even from the printed page.

But the conception of the Absolute that is specially engaging the attention and the thoughts of men at the present moment is that of Mr. Bosanquet. It has been keenly canvassed by Professor Pringle-Pattison in his Gifford Lectures; and, more recently, it has been re-discussed by the two controversialists in the Aristotelian Society, under the question, "Do finite individuals possess a substantive or an adjectival mode of being?"¹ each ending by adhering to his own formerly expressed position. Mr. Bosanquet's doctrine (a modification of Mr. Bradley's) is aptly summarized by himself in the following paragraph, concerning the human individual and his existence, from his Aristotelian Society paper:

"It is more natural to suppose," he says, "that our brief existence is the temporal appearance of some character of the whole, such as, in any case, constitutes a very great part of the finite individual's reality as experienced in the world. For what appears as a passage in time, the Absolute has need to express itself through us as very subordinate units. And there are indications which point in this direction, and suggest in what

¹ See *Proceedings* of the Society, vol. xviii. (new series), pp. 479-530.

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kind of worlds or higher complexes we might find our completion. While we serve as units, to speak the language of appearance, the absolute lives in us a little, and for a little time; when its life demands our existence no longer, we yet blend with it as the pervading features or characters, which we were needed for a passing moment to emphasize, and in which our reality enriches the universe.”¹

The view, then, is that the finite spiritual individual has only an “adjectival” mode of being—is only a “predicate” of the Absolute. Its final destiny is to be absorbed in the Absolute—to blend with it, or be merged in it. Is this a satisfactory rendering either of the Absolute or of the finite individual? We can only refer to our own experience of ourselves for guidance. The individual self as experienced is distinct from other selves, but, while distinct, shares with them its possessions and in turn derives much from intercourse and communion with them—thoughts, emotions, aspirations, and ideals; and in this sense, may be said thus far to blend with them. But this kind of blending or merging is something entirely different from what Professor Bosanquet’s Absolutism demands, for it is not really the

¹ See *Proceedings of the Society*, vol. xviii. (new series), pp. 505-506.

blending of selves, but the blending of aims and interests that we have here. But the theory of the Absolute as that in which finite individuals are ultimately merged needs more than merging of interests and harmony of individual wills, and reduces the finite individual to "illusion" or mere appearance. This is to go far beyond what the facts can warrant. For, though the finite spiritual self as experienced is essentially social, and so is interrelated with other finite individuals, this interrelatedness does not swamp the individual in the community, or strip him of his uniqueness. On the contrary, it is the condition of his expansion and development, the common element in which he, as unique, finds congenial life and thrives. In like manner, the finite spiritual individual in relation to the Absolute is not absorbed or merged in the Absolute here, so that his uniqueness is cancelled or overborne. Consequently, there is nothing in our experience that would lead us to suppose that ultimately he will be merged in the Absolute or blend with it. The idea of absorption, merging, blending, does not conserve the nature of the finite spiritual individual as we know it, nor does it give us an attractive expression of the Absolute itself. We can hardly avoid thinking of the Absolute as a sort of huge steam-engine, which, for its efficiency, needs constant re-stoking.

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This obviously cannot express the real nature of the ultimate creative source of life and being, or do justice to the creative and self-determining power that we feel is characteristic of the finite centre of active consciousness—the finite centre of thought and of activity—that we designate the Self.

“It seems a hard thing to say,” is Professor Pringle-Pattison’s uncompromising reply to Mr. Bosanquet’s restatement of his view, “but a reading of this restatement confirms the suspicion already indicated that, in all his thinking, Professor Bosanquet completely fails to realize the elementary conditions of selfhood. In his theory there is no real self at all, either of God or man, but only a logical transparency called the Absolute. In speaking of ‘finite selves’ he seems never to look at them from the inside, if I may so express myself, but always from the point of view of a spectator momentarily concentrating attention upon them in abstraction from the social whole which is their setting. He insists, quite rightly, that if our minds could be ‘visualized’ in this way, ‘they would not look like self-contained shapes’; they would appear ‘fragmentary and incomprehensible . . . all senseless and self-contradictory apart from the inclusive structural system.’ But because a mind cannot be extracted

and exhibited as a self-contained whole apart from 'the moral and spiritual structure' in which it is rooted, it does not follow that the mind or self is simply a punctual centre in which a system of moral and social relations reflects itself into unity as rays of light are concentrated in a focus. The existence of the self for the self is an experienced certainty; it is, in a sense, the ground on which we stand. We must take our stand accordingly *within* the self, and our philosophy must be able to account for, or at least to find room for, this mode of existence and the measure of freedom and independence which it involves."¹ With that I fully agree.

If now, we ask the question, in regard to the Absolute and Theism, "Are there for the theist both God and the Absolute?" the answer can only be that this is by no means necessary, if God is conceived, as He must be, as superhuman and a living Divine personal reality. In any theistic view, God is taken as greater than man and greater than all finite spiritual realities (angelic and other), and, consequently, not comprehensible in the full essence of His being by the finite. Real in his manifestations to finite humanity, and cognizable by us in His reality to the extent of

¹ See *Proceedings* of the Society, vol. xviii. (new series), pp. 517-518.

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our intellectual, emotional, and conative powers, He is, nevertheless, not completely known by us. We are necessarily shut out from omniscience by our limited faculties, and we are kept back from fullest insight and the highest intuition by our moral shortcomings and sins. But knowledge grows with experience, and insight deepens with progressing moral character and increasing purity of heart and holiness of life; and what the future life has in store for us when sin and death are no more we can only faintly imagine, though we hope and believe that it is something beyond what eye has seen or ear heard or human heart conceived. But even then, although we represent it to ourselves under such figures as our being "parts of God" or being "taken up" into the Divine, we do not thereby understand that we shall actually *be* God, or that the distinction of finite and Infinite is then completely abolished. If there is qualitative sameness, there is not numerical identity. It is ours as spirits to be akin to God, "made in His image," and capable of holding intimate communion with Him; and that may well be sufficient for us if, in the eternal future, we have a wholly congenial environment afforded us for nearer and fuller intercourse with Him, for developing our nature and purifying and perfecting the Divine image in us.

There are not both God and the Absolute, then: God *is* the Absolute; and if we make any distinction in the use of the terms "God" and "the Absolute" as applied to Him, it would consist simply, I should suggest, in this, that "God" is the term more properly designative of the Supreme Being when we are viewing Him as known by us or as revealed to us in our personal relations with Him, whereas "the Absolute" is more strictly applicable at moments when we are specially conscious to ourselves of the fact that God transcends our knowledge of Him, and that our personal relations with Him cannot exhaust or fully fathom His nature. He is the Infinite, and we the finite; He is the Unconditioned, while we are conditioned and dependent; He is the Perfect, and the Source of perfection, in contrast with ourselves the imperfect and the feeble.

There is still a point of advance to be adverted to, although it has been frequently touched upon as we proceeded—namely, the keenness at the present moment of the appreciation of God as *Redeemer* of the world, and the strenuous attempts that have been made, and are being made from the side of philosophy, to realize what this signifies as God *suffering* for men's sins, experiencing *sorrow* for them, and feeling men's repentance. Atonement has been strenuously analysed in the

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light of vicarious suffering of man for man, as we find it on earth in our ordinary social life and dealings one with another, as it is involved in sympathy and altruism and the very idea of the solidarity of the race, and a view of the Divine in relation to humanity, based on this analogy, has been reached, which, though bold, is luminous and touches the heart while it enlightens the understanding. A true recognition of the worth and nature of personality lies at the root of it, and a firm conviction of the need of explaining the deep things of our experience in the light of our social nature and through a minute analysis of the concepts "penitence" and "forgiveness."¹

This awakened interest on the part of philosophy in the concept of Divine redemption is but a consequence of the modern intense realization of God as an immanent Deity. And this in turn is accentuated by the modern scientific view of the world as dynamic and not simply static. Change is the significant fact in the universe (as Heraclitus long ago taught), and fixed nature or determinate constitution of things is only complementary to that. In this way, the world is to be taken as continually evolving—as a never-ending process,

¹ No one has presented this in a more striking manner than Mr. R. G. Collingwood of Oxford in his *Religion and Philosophy*. See his chapters on "The Self-Expression of God in Man" and "God's Redemption of Man," pp. 147-193.

active and productive, and not a fully formed, finally constructed something.

But if God is immanent in the world thus evolving, then we must discard the hard-and-fast line formerly drawn by thinkers between Nature and the supernatural—a distinction that practically shut God out of His own universe, unless on the rare occasions when He intervened by miracle to disturb and (some thought) overturn the laws of Nature or natural causation. Natural law and Divine interference were then regarded as contradictory of each other. But now that God is understood to be *in* His world as well as greater than it, natural causation is seen to be only a manifestation of His presence and an expression of His will.¹

Having gone thus far, we cannot stop here. For God's immanence designates not only His constant presence in the universe, but also His indwelling presence in the souls of men and His active operation in their lives. This means ultimately the Incarnation—"God manifest in the flesh." Thus only is due regard paid to man's living experience of the world of Nature and to his knowledge of his own needs and heart.

But the fulness of the conception leads us farther; it discloses to our view the Deity as

¹ See Romanes, *Thoughts on Religion*, p. 123.

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Himself sharing in the experiences of His finite human creatures ; not only encouraging, inspiring, helping men to realize themselves—to rise to higher thoughts and clearer vision, to purer lives and stronger character—not only this, but also Himself sharing in man's finite experiences, redeeming them through suffering, and thereby revealing in Himself the real nature and supreme value of self-sacrifice ; involving the obverse of this—namely, men as fellow-workers with Him. It is characteristic of Christianity to have shown the depth of the meaning of God's immanence in the light of the Cross.

II

But, while all these gains of recent times may be recounted in the interest of Theism, it is necessary to record also a recent retrogression in theistic conception. It has come from various quarters—specially from the side of Radical Empiricism. God, it is maintained, is neither omniscient nor omnipotent. He is only a *finite* being, checked and hindered in His operation by forces that go beyond His own control. (Back, then, to the position of J. S. Mill.¹)

The general argument in favour of it is that our experience of life can give us nothing more.

¹ See the third of his *Three Essays on Religion*.

The world in which we live is a world of constant conflict and imperfection—a world in which sin and sorrow are rampant, and where unrest is universal, where pain and suffering hold distressing sway, and where righteousness has no obvious advantage over wickedness—where, indeed, wickedness seems to have the best of it, being so often crowned by prosperity. This, when borne home upon our reflection, will not allow us to speak of an all-powerful, all-good, and all-wise God: the facts of life seem clear against it. An *omnipotent* God, it is said, would at once put an end to wickedness and suffering; an *all-wise* God would have taken care not to bring into being a world where sin and pain should prevail, or even into which they should enter; and an *all-good* God would see to it that virtue were adequately rewarded and vice duly punished without fail. This cry from the heart is as old as Job and much older, and most people know it. And, certainly, the moment that has just gone by,¹ with the appalling barbarities and horrors of the titanic world struggle and the shattering to so large an extent of civilization and ideals of which we had been boasting and which we thought secure for untold time to come, has brought it painfully and despondingly home to us. "If there is a God,"

¹ Written in 1919.

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we often cried recently, "let Him rend the heavens and come down; let Him show Himself in power and make a swift end of these horrors and of savagery. Let God prevail, and let not Moloch and the powers of hell obtain supremacy."

But, harrowing though all this be, and oppressive though the problem of evil may become to us, the conception of a finite deity is no solution of the enigma. It is only a restatement of the difficulty. For the question immediately arises, If deity there be, why should there be only a *finite* deity? Are sin and pain in themselves invincible? Is not sin *even now vanquished*? Sin indeed exists, but it has not the mastery. The continued existence of human society proves it; for, as the essence of sin is to disintegrate and destroy, not to conserve and build up and cement, if it had the full mastery, society would crumble to pieces and chaos would ensue. "From the very moment of its entrance into the world," as I have elsewhere put it,¹ "sin comes as a conquered factor; and the very day the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord in fealty and humble submission, Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord." Again, is omnipotence only a grandiose and meaningless word? If God be merely finite, we are back to the level of polytheism, out of

¹ See my *Theism and Human Nature*, p. 460.

which monotheism raised us—back to the notion of a God of the “magnified natural man” type, who owes his supremacy simply to the superior success with which, for our comfort and gratification, he holds in check opposing forces and proves himself more potent than antagonists. But is that the greatest height to which we can rise? Is experience of the world only bad and disheartening? Are “all the ills that flesh is heir to” really ills? Is it reasonable for us to take up the attitude and insist that the whole purpose and meaning of the universe must be made absolutely plain to us before we will believe? Difficulties in life there must be to a finite being—difficulties both intellectual and ethical. That is implied in the very idea of finitude. There can be no such difficulties to God, because, by hypothesis, He is omniscient. There can be no riddle of the universe to Him—the riddle is created by limited and imperfect knowledge; and it eases and calms our minds to some extent when we clearly perceive this and definitely realize it to ourselves. Obscurities there must be to us in an *infinite* purpose—all the more so that the purpose is being worked out only as the ages run.

A finite deity, then, does not meet the situation. The conception is only a particular way of saying that the world of our experience shows evil mixed

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with good, pain with pleasure, sorrow with gladness in a perplexing fashion. But if the good and the pleasure and the gladness in it are to be ascribed to the finite deity, another finite deity must needs be postulated to explain the evil and the pain and the suffering. We are thus thrown back on Manichæism, with our problem unsolved.

But, further still, can God's power be said to be, in any real sense, limited because He does not at once put an end to sorrow and suffering? Not, certainly, if we remember that the exercise of His power is ethically determined and graciously conditioned by His Love—a love disinterested and wise. It is the great function of pain to ennoble, elevate, and enrich the nature and character of men. Consequently, for man's good and for the attainment of his best interests, the Cross and self-sacrifice are indispensable. We may often feel that God could, if He would, do as we wish in His help towards us; but we fail to understand that He often will not, when apparently He can, because, by such restraint, He means to work out in us and by us a more perfect result. The point is that, all the while we are suffering, He may be bringing to pass what we at heart desire, only not in our way, but in the manner that is best suited to the fact that we are His free-will co-workers, with our characters only in course of formation, and destined

to be heroes. Providence is not a fully completed or ready-made thing, but a living process going on and in the making; and the development of that process and the rate of its development depend in part upon ourselves. Hardness and endurance and the cross are indispensable if this process in which we are involved, but *in which also we are active agents with real creative power*, is to be effective. Raise pain to the heroic level and it becomes transformed, and we can accept it without undue complaint, seeing that it is working out the higher Divine purpose, and purifying and raising our own character. Thus we see that the world has been made rough for us that thereby moral heroes might be possible. A soft world would not have served this purpose, any more than a soft creed can produce strong moral natures. Severity, as well as goodness, is required if man is to reach the perfection of his moral stature. That is the meaning of life's harsh experiences.

These and many similar points are now coming to be more and more enforced from the side of philosophy, and it is one of the best signs of the time;¹ and, although evil must ever remain a problem to us, the conception of the world as a process and not a completed thing, not a block

¹ See, for example, Prof. W. R. Sorley's Gifford Lectures on *Moral Values, and the Idea of God*, p. 445, etc.

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system but something ever evolving, and working towards an end with God guiding and man co-operating, and recognition of the fact that goodness has to be won by man and cannot be thrust upon him even from on high—these considerations turn the edge of the difficulty, and change despair into hopefulness. The spirit of the conqueror, invigorating and cheering—the spirit of the free man working towards victory—lays hold of us as our stubborn, strenuous resistance of evil tends to make evil disappear, and to further the advent of better things.

So much for the nature and the general basis of the conception of a finite God as it is at present exercising people's thoughts. Let us now take one or two concrete instances of recent presentations of this declension (so I regard it) from the pure theistic position.

1. In his *Pluralistic Universe*¹ William James affirms, "Theism makes a duality of Man and God, and leaves Man an outsider"; "The theistic conception, picturing God and His creation as entities distinct from each other, still leaves the human subject outside of the deepest reality in the universe." Is this an adequate representation of the case? I think not. For the duality in Theism is not

¹ Pp. iii. and 25.

thoroughgoing or absolute, inasmuch as man is conceived as the son or offspring of God, and both are *spiritual* beings. The term "outsider" in this connexion is, strictly speaking, inapplicable. *Spirit* cannot be conceived, except in a misleading metaphor, as *outside* spirit, least of all can this be done in relation to the *Infinite* Spirit. God is not "outside," even when viewed as man's Creator; for the Creator, in creating, has "inspired" His human offspring: "the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding." Moreover, God, the efficient cause, is also the final cause of man: *fecisti nos ad te, Domine*. The creation of man, indeed, may be naively expressed, as in the second Creation narrative of the Book of *Genesis*, which fixes on the vivid simile of the Potter and the Clay; but even then man is shown as made in God's image and endowed with special dignity and authority from on high, so that an "outsider" he is not in any proper sense of the term: there can be no "outsider" of Him in whom we live and move and have our being. The position of Theism certainly is that *man is not God*; but not less is it the position of Theism that *man is nothing apart from God*. A duality there is, but it is a duality in spiritual unity; and the ground of it, and the sole ground of it, is God.

A great many terms that we apply to God are

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from the very nature of the case, inadequate. We say that He "contains" all things, that He is "all-inclusive," that He "encircles" the universe, and so on. These and many similar words and phrases are aiming, as best they may, at expressing what we feel and at bodying forth our exalted idea of the Divine nature; and they serve to impress and solemnize us, for, owing to the magnitude of their content, they are terms of sublimity. Thus far they exercise a useful and helpful function; but they may mislead us. They bear on them the mark of the materialistic origin of human language, and, if taken literally or used lazily, produce an entirely erroneous impression. To "contain" or to "encircle" or to be "all-inclusive" are words perfectly appropriate to material vessels filled with content. A jar contains and wholly encloses the liquid that is in it. Each of these, jar and liquid, is wholly distinct from the other, and the relation that holds between them is an *external* one—that of container and contained: the one circumscribes the other; and, for the rest, the two are apart. Not so with God and man. The relation here is between two beings, each of whom is in spiritual union and communion with the other, both being akin; and the creature is united in ethical fellowship with the Creator in a manner that no jar and its contents can be. It is man's prerogative to draw his being

and life from God as its source, and to retain it by constant communion with Him. But man is *finite*, and, therefore, cannot *be* the Infinite; yet he is a spirit, and, consequently, cannot be absolutely dissociated from the *Infinite*. "Externality," "outside," and the like, in strictness refer only to bodies occupying space, and need to be cautiously interpreted when transferred to spirits.

But, if this be so, it is obvious that James's conception of God as *limited* or *finite* cannot be final. A God who is only one individual among other individuals (even though He be *primus inter pares*), "only one of the eaches (as he expresses it) in a pluralistic universe,"¹ cannot stand the strain of our religious experience, nor does the conception really throw light on our difficulties. Doubtless, his theory was specially aimed at the Bradleyan doctrine of the Absolute, which he never loses an opportunity of designating a "monstrosity," both repugnant and impotent; and its chief recommendation is that, as opposed to such teaching, it gives the line of least resistance. "The line of least resistance, then," he says,² "as it seems to me, both in theology and in philosophy, is to accept, along with the superhuman consciousness, the

¹ A *Pluralistic Universe*, p. 44; see also *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 525.

² *Id.* p. 311.

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notion that it is not all-embracing,—the notion, in other words, that there is a God, but that He is finite, either in power or in knowledge, or in both at once.”¹ It may be the line of least resistance as against the Bradleyan monism, but it is not a line that terminates in a satisfactory theistic position. In the first place, the theory is lacking in a thorough preliminary analysis of the ideas of limitation and self-limitation, and, consequently, in a clear exposition of the meaning of omniscience and omnipotence; and, had this defect been remedied, it would doubtless have been found that much of the difficulty regarding omniscience and omnipotence arises from an irrational interpretation of the concepts limitation and self-limitation, demanding that reason’s laws shall not apply to the Divine Reason. Light would also have been thrown upon the situation by a thorough handling of sin as alienating or estranging man from God, and what all is meant by *alienation* or *estrangement*.²

¹ Compare J. S. Mill, *Essays*, iii.

² Much fresh work has been done by philosophers quite recently in expounding the notions omnipotence and omniscience and the like—as, for instance, by Professor Ward in his *Realm of Ends: Pluralism and Theism*, and by Mr. R. G. Collingwood in his *Religion and Philosophy*. For further light on the pragmatist view, on the other hand, see Dr. F. C. S. Schiller’s paper on “Omnipotence,” read before the Aristotelian Society on 8th April 1918 (*Proceedings*, new series, vol. xviii. pp. 247–270).

In the next place, the conception of a thorough-going pluralistic universe or "multiverse" (as he also calls it) has difficulties peculiar to itself—especially the difficulty of making it clear how such pluralism can give a "universe" at all, except in the sense of a mere summation of units; the multiplicity of particulars has underlying it no real living Unity that suffices. Lastly, while having a certain practical value in stimulating human endeavour to promote progress in the world, it lacks the inspiring force in this respect of the world conceived as embodying an infinite purpose, the ultimate realization of which is sure because "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth"; and man's efforts to co-operate with the Divine, halting though they may be, are, for the same reason, destined to be effective. All that the pragmatistic type of theism gives is only at the best meliorism and moralism, as James himself allows:¹ the antagonism among the powers at work in the "multiverse" cannot be surmounted.

2. In James's theory, there is posited only "the superhuman consciousness" that is merely finite. Other modern writers, however, who adhere to the finiteness of God, have found it necessary to postulate in addition a super-God—an Absolute of the kind that appeals to a certain type of

¹ See his *Pragmatism*, p 301.

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mysticism. Such is the theory of Mr. H. G. Wells, in his *God the Invisible King*. According to him, God is finite—a righteous person, indeed, but imperfect, struggling, and developing, just like the developing universe itself (which, of course, he did not create). He has to do only with the evolving world of space and time and change, and does not inhabit eternity. Although somewhere in the dawning of mankind he had beginning, he is divine, and immortal, but his divinity and, therefore, his limited perfection, consists simply in the fact that his intentions are always pure. Behind and beyond him is “the Veiled Being,” of which or of whom we know nothing, and of whom or of which little or nothing is known by the finite God, any more than by ourselves. “At the back of all known things there is an impenetrable curtain; the ultimate of existence is a Veiled Being, which seems to know nothing of life or death or good or ill. . . . The new religion does not pretend that the God of its life is that Being, or that he has any relation of control or association with that Being. It does not even assert that God knows all or much more than we do about that ultimate Being.”¹ With God as finite being alone (“the God of the Heart,” as he is designated, in contradistinction to “the God of Nature”) can

¹ *God the Invisible King*, pp. 16, 17.

we have personal relations, and so can feel towards Him the various religious emotions and can be helped in our lives by holding converse and communion with Him. But, while the soul may be strengthened and ennobled by a consciousness of His presence and (if one care to call it so) His indwelling, He is not to be conceived as the Spirit that indwells in Nature: such immanence is forbidden by His finitude.

Of this view it may be said that, although it may possess a certain attractiveness to certain natures, it has little or no philosophical value. An absolutely "veiled being"—a being of whom we can predicate nothing, who reveals himself in no way, is a being that occupies the most unworthy, and if rightly conceived, the most contemptible of all positions—that of *otium cum dignitate*. Yet this view is pretentiously set forth as "a new religion," strongly antagonistic to Christian teaching, and glorying avowedly in being heterodox. But it owes more to Christian conceptions and Christian phraseology than it allows. At any rate, it is dogmatic enough, and does not deign to give reasons for its statements, but simply makes assertions at will, leaving us often wondering why certain things are accepted and dogmatically affirmed, while others, equally reasonable to all appearance, are summarily rejected. Individual

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arbitrary preference seems to be the main ground for selection.

That this "new religion" should give permanent satisfaction to thinking people, gauging the matter from within religious experience itself, I cannot believe. What the normal religious consciousness demands, as I understand it, is a God who (as St. Anselm defined Him) is "that than which no greater can be conceived";¹ or, to put it in terms of modern philosophy, who is the Ultimate Reality and Reality that reveals itself. To it, a reality beyond the Divine Reality is a contradiction in terms. There is an alluring mystical suggestion, no doubt, in "the Veiled Being," and it has permeated mysticism from the beginning. Far back in time, it was expressed in Egypt when the worshippers of Isis claimed for the Goddess, "I am all that has been, is, and shall be, and no mortal has lifted my veil."² But what truth this conception involves is duly provided for in the Theistic teaching of to-day. When Scripture says of God as Ultimate Reality that He "dwells in light that is unapproachable," it may be said to be declaring Him to be "the Veiled Being." And so it is, if we interpret the expression rightly. But it is not saying that God is the *wholly* veiled Being, or the wholly unknown and unknowable, but

¹ *Proslogion*, ii.

² Plutarch, *de Is. et Osir.*, ix.

only that His excellence is so great that we cannot fathom or exhaust it. For, be it observed, although in God's immediate presence finite man would be "blinded with excess of light," as the human eye is blinded when it gazes at the blazing noonday sun, it is in *Light* that God dwells ("who coverest thyself with light as with a garment"); and that means a great deal to us, for, if the garment of God be *Light*, He cannot be shut off in darkness: we know what light is, and what we owe to it. It means nothing less than that the great Being who is the Ultimate Reality is to us illumination (intellectual, moral, æsthetic, spiritual, and religious) and the exhaustless source of it, revealing Himself to us in Nature in the light of the sun, and thereby giving us some taste and idea of the glory which He Himself inhabits. In the conception of "the Veiled Being," Mr. Wells, I should wish to believe, is really trying (all unwittingly, perhaps) to give utterance to the transcendence, as distinct from the immanence, of God—to what St. Anselm again expressed when he added to his definition of God as "that than which no greater can be conceived" the complementary thought, "But Thou art something greater than can be conceived."¹ But, although that is very proper to be done, it will never be done satisfactorily if transcendence

¹ *Proslogion*, xv.

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is wholly cut off from immanence and the transcendent left without expression in the immanent. If God be not both transcendent and immanent, He is not Ultimate Reality, and the God of Theism, meeting human need, is still to seek.

LECTURE VII

NATURAL THEOLOGY, AND SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

“That they should seek God, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him.”—ST. PAUL.

“Yet Truth is keenly sought for, and the wind
Charged with rich words poured out in thought's defence;
Whether the Church inspire that eloquence,
Or a Platonic Piety confined
To the sole temple of the inward mind.”

WORDSWORTH.

“He who wrestles with us strengthens our nerves, and sharpens our skill. Our antagonist is our helper.”—BURKE.

IT only now remains, in order to complete the plan of these lectures, to work out a grouping or classification of the Gifford Lectures from the beginning down to the year 1919, and to give such characterization of each set of lectures as shall help to show, in as brief form as possible, the nature of Natural Theology and the area of the subject that has been covered. The groups or classes cannot, of course, be mutually exclusive. We are dealing here with living thought, which refuses to be rigorously con-

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fined to sharp-cut compartments: overlapping, from the nature of the case, is inevitable. Enough if the groupings I have given serve to aid the reader in apprehending the various standpoints of the lecturers, and in gaining a definite view of the region traversed.

A.—ORIGIN OF THE IDEA OF GOD, AND THE GROWTH OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

(Anthropology, Mythology, etc.)

Naturally enough, at the moment when the Gifford Lectures were first instituted, the attention of thinkers was specially directed to the anthropological aspect of religious conceptions. Anthropology had just then shaped itself into a separate science ("the science of Man"), and general interest was aroused. This was mainly due, in our land, to the vigorous efforts of such men as Professor E. B. Tylor and Herbert Spencer, who had collected an enormous mass of striking facts, culled from many quarters, from the study of savage races throughout the world, and who offered startling theories of their own regarding the interpretation of the facts, which led to keen discussion and controversy. It is no surprise, then, to find that three out of the four Scottish Universities appointed an anthropologist as their

first lecturer—Mr. Andrew Lang for St. Andrews, Professor Max Müller for Glasgow, and Professor E. B. Tylor for Aberdeen.

1. Professor Tylor's lectures, delivered at Aberdeen in 1899-91, were (so far as I know) never published, at least as Gifford Lectures, but they dealt with savage peoples and their beliefs, ways, and customs; and wearing apparel, implements (stone, flint, and other), and objects of religious interest among the lower races were exhibited in illustration of the lecturer's discourses.

2. But Andrew Lang's Gifford Lectures were embodied, in substance at any rate, in his book on *The Making of Religion*, published in 1898. It is a little treatise on Anthropology, divided into two sections—one occupied with criticism of the current anthropological theory of "the origins of the belief in *spirits*" (a belief maintained to be derived from the idea of *ghosts* or phantasms of the dead), the other with criticism of the current anthropological theory "as to how, the notion of spirit once attained, man arrived at the idea of a Supreme Being." The criticism is aimed in chief at Tylor and Spencer. The book was very opportune when it first appeared, and it has interest and value still. It had the audacity to dispute the legitimacy of accepting the modern savage as the sure representative of "primitive" man, and

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to raise the question as to whether the real "primitive" man may not have possessed a religious belief in "high gods," instead of starting with the debased notions of the modern savage and working his way upwards, so that notions of the type of the modern-savage religion, in place of being the base material out of which ultimately the higher religious concept emerged, would be a degeneration or retrogression from the higher. And how the process of degeneration (through animism supplanting theism) might have been brought about is clearly and forcibly indicated by the application of certain well-known principles and tendencies of human nature taken as operating in a certain early environment (social and political). Vividly he puts it thus: "'How,' it has been asked, 'could all mankind forget a pure religion?' That is what I now try to explain. That degeneration I would account for by the attractions which animism, when once developed, possessed for the naughty natural man, 'the old Adam.' A moral creator in need of no gifts, and opposed to lust and mischief, will not help a man with love-spells, or with malevolent 'sendings' of disease, by witchcrafts; will not favour one man above his neighbour, or one tribe above its rivals, as a reward for sacrifice which he does not accept, or as constrained by charms which do not touch his

omnipotence. Ghosts and ghost-gods, on the other hand, in need of food and blood, afraid of spells and binding charms, are a corrupt, but, to man, a useful constituency. Man being what he is, man was certain to 'go a-whoring' after practically useful ghosts, ghost-gods, and fetishes which he could keep in his wallet or medicine bag. For these, he was sure, in the long run, first to neglect his idea of his Creator, next, perhaps, to reckon Him as only one, if the highest, of the venal rabble of spirits or deities, and to sacrifice to Him, as to them. And this [mentioning a particular instance] is exactly what happened! If we are not to call it 'degeneration,' what are we to call it?"¹

Whether or not the hypothesis or suggestion that, in the "primitive" man's belief, theism (of an undeveloped kind, of course), the belief in "high gods," came first and animism was a declension from that position be accepted (and anthropologists in general have rejected it), there can be little question, I think, that Mr. Lang's exposure of the pitfalls by which the investigator into the origin of religious beliefs is beset and into which he may easily be led, and, in particular, his warning against the *petitio principii* of assuming without reservation that knowledge of the

¹ *The Making of Religion*, p. 257.

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savage races is knowledge of primitive man, has served a good and salutary purpose.

3. The Gifford Lectures of Professor F. Max Müller, delivered before the University of Glasgow in the years 1888, 1890, 1891, and 1892, cover an extensive field, embracing Natural Religion, Physical Religion, Anthropological Religion, and Theosophy or Psychological Religion. Each course of lectures is published in a separate volume, and each theme is worked out with the fulness that characterizes Max Müller's writings, and with the adroit manipulation of the material that readers of his works know so well. Vol. i. is occupied with *Natural Religion*, and, after defining Religion, discusses and answers the questions: (1) What are the limits of Natural Religion? (2) What is the proper method of studying it? and (3) What are the materials accessible for such study? Emphasis is laid, among other things, on the inseparableness of language and thought—a subject on which Max Müller delighted to expatiate,¹ and to which he returns again and again in these lectures; and the materials for the study of natural religion are succinctly enumerated as Language, Myths, Customs, and Sacred Books. Vol. ii. is devoted to *Physical Religion*, or the worship of nature-gods; where, *inter alia*, we have

¹ See, e.g., his *Science of Language*, vol. ii.

the Veda and Vedic literature brought before us, the biography and mythological development of Agni considered, and the usefulness of the Vedic religion for a comparative study of other religions insisted on. *Anthropological Religion* is the subject of vol. iii., treating of ancestor worship or the worship of ancestral spirits, and of such doctrines as those of the soul and a future life. Vol. iv. is devoted to *Psychological Religion*, also designated by Max Müller *Theosophy*, so as to bring back that sublime term to its legitimate use and to rescue it from the debased usage of modern times. It is concerned with "what lies hidden in man, considered not merely as a creature, or as a part of nature, but as a self-conscious subject"; consciousness of self becoming consciousness of the Infinite or the Divine within us. "The individual self found itself again in the Divine self, not absorbed in it, but hidden in it; and united with it by a half-human and half-divine relationship. We find the earliest name for the Infinite, as discovered by man within himself in the ancient Upanishads. There it is called Âtman, the Self, or Pratyagâtman, the Self that lies behind, looking and longing for the Paramâtman, the Highest Self—and yet it is not far from every one of us. Socrates knew the same Self, but he called it *Daimonion*, the indwelling God. The early Christian philosophers called it the *Holy*

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Ghost, a name which has received many interpretations and misinterpretations in different Schools of theology, but which ought to become again, what it was meant for in the beginning, the Spirit which united all that is holy within man with the Holy of Holies or the Infinite behind the Veil of the Ego, or of the merely personal and phenomenal self.”¹ In this we see the nature of Max Müller’s famous theory of the origin of man’s knowledge of God. Such knowledge, according to him, arises from perception or consciousness of the Infinite as discovery of that which is hidden (*a*) behind nature, and (*b*) behind man (“taking man as an ‘objective reality, and as the representative of all that we comprehend under the name of mankind”), and (*c*) in man himself considered as a self-conscious subject.²

4. Dr. J. G. Frazer’s Gifford Lectures on *The Belief in Immortality and the Worship of the Dead*, delivered at St. Andrews in 1911 and 1912, and published in a single volume in 1913, are full of interest to students of anthropology and are characterized by the close thinking and the fulness of knowledge to which the author of *The Golden Bough* has accustomed us. They are written purely from the historical standpoint, and are, therefore, neither dogmatic nor philosophic, but descriptive,—

¹ *Physical Religion*, pp. 1–5.

² Compare with Professor Tiele’s view *below*, p. 182.

descriptive of the various views regarding the subject treated, and tracing their origin and evolution in history. They deal with the beliefs and practices concerning the dead among the Aborigines of Australia, the islanders of the Torres Straits, the natives of New Guinea, and the natives of Melanesia (southern, central, northern, and eastern).

5. Professor C. P. Tiele's Gifford Lectures on *Elements of the Science of Religion*, delivered before the University of Edinburgh in 1896 and 1898, and published in two volumes in 1897 and 1899, are concerned with a study that "forms a department of anthropological, not of metaphysical science." The object of this science is declared to be, "not the supernatural itself, but religion based on belief in the supernatural," and the aim of it the investigation of religion "as a historical, psychological, social, and wholly human phenomenon."¹ The lectures are divided into two parts "Morphological" and "Ontological," constituting respectively vols. i. and ii. Vol. i. is occupied with consideration of the notion of Development in General and of the essentials of the development of Religion in special, and lays stress on the fact that religious development proceeds upon two principles—progress by differentiation, and striving after unity. Vol. ii. sets forth the essential and

¹ *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. i. p. 9.

permanent elements of religion and its origin, laying the foundation of religion in "man's more or less unconscious sense of the Infinite within him, or of his participation in the Infinite."¹ "The origin of religion consists," he says, "in the fact that man *has* the Infinite within him, even before he is himself conscious of it, and whether he recognizes it or not."² In this way, Professor Tiele's view is to be differentiated from that of Max Müller, who laid the origin of religion in the *perception* of the Infinite. The style is limpid, and the lectures are characterized by good sense and discrimination, and by moderation of judgment in cases when allied, yet partially antagonistic, standpoints are under review—as we find, for instance, in the handling of the problem of the relation of morality to religion.

6. In this group would also be included (1) William James's Gifford Lectures on *Varieties of Religious Experience*, for his dissection of the various religious states (normal and abnormal) and his doctrine of the subliminal consciousness are just an attempt to explain how men came by their notion or notions of God, but James's positions all round have been already sufficiently referred to in the body of my Lectures; and (2) Professor Sir

¹ *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. ii. p. 257.

² *Id.* vol. ii. p. 230.

William Ridgeway's ethnological lectures (witty, humorous, and erudite), at Aberdeen, in 1909-11, on "The Evolution of the Religions of Ancient Greece and Rome," but these are not yet published. Perhaps, here also (3) might be inserted Professor Rodolfo Lanciani's Gifford Lectures at St. Andrews in 1899-1900 and 1900-1. They were not published as Gifford Lectures, but a portion of them finds place in his *New Tales of Old Rome*, which appeared in 1901. In his Preface to that work he says: "The volume contains those parts only of my lectures which refer to recent archæological and historical research in Rome, and which have not appeared in my previous publications." This speaks for itself.

Once more (4) Professor Sir William M. Ramsay's Gifford Lectures at Edinburgh on "The Religions of Anatolia," delivered in 1916 and 1917, would seem to find their place here. But neither a programme of the lectures nor the lectures themselves would appear to have been published.

B.—PHILOSOPHICAL DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGION

I. *Rationality of Religion*

1. Professor Edward Caird's Gifford Lectures on *The Evolution of Religion*, delivered before the

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University of St. Andrews, in Sessions 1890-91 and 1891-92, and published in two volumes in 1893, have this for their central position: That there are three stages through which the human mind passes in the course of its development: it looks *outwards*, and fills our life with objective things and interests; it looks *inwards*, returning upon itself and becoming conscious of an inner life of its own, "in which we are separated from all others"; and it looks *upwards*, thereby enabling us to regard our whole life, inner and outer, as based upon and circumscribed by a Power wherein we live and move and have our being. These stages—each natural to man—occur in the exact order here indicated: the outward look precedes the inward, and both precede the look upwards. But, although the look upwards is the latest in the order of development, it is logically the presupposition of the other two, enabling us to discern their true meaning and disclosing the principle that reconciles subject (the inward) and object (the outward). For, "the consciousness of God (the supreme Unity) is as near to us, as necessary to us, as the consciousness of the world or of the self; nay, in a sense, it has a higher necessity than either, and we are nearer to God than to ourselves: for the consciousness of self rests upon the idea of God, as at once its first

presupposition and its last end and goal. All our life is a progress through the world and through ourselves to the God from whom we come, in whom we are, to whom we tend.”¹

Hence, in tracing the evolution of religion, Professor Caird’s handling takes naturally the form of an analysis and appreciation in turn of the three religious types—the objective, the subjective, and the universal. But the treatment of objective and of subjective religion, elaborate though it be, is subordinated to the treatment of the ultimate and universal religion found in Christianity—the culmination of the efforts of the religious consciousness, purifying and combining the other two religious phases, gathering them up into a higher synthesis, thereby proving itself to be the absolute or universal religion, “the religion of spirit” *par excellence*.

To the handling of Christianity, led up to by a lucid exposition of Judaism, a great part of vol. ii. is devoted, and many things of significance are said regarding the nature of the Christian faith as seen in “the religion of Jesus,” in the development of the Christian doctrines by St. Paul, and in the spiritual idealism of the teaching of St. John. But, while acknowledging the value and impressive power of a good deal that is here put

¹ *The Evolution of Religion*, vol. ii. p. 2.

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forward, I cannot feel satisfied that the treatment and exposition are beyond criticism. Dr. Caird's philosophy is too "clean cut," as William James would put it, to be adequate to the richness and fulness of content of the Christian faith. For one thing, it shuns the idea of the *personality* of God, and sets forth the Supreme Being as simply "the principle of unity" in all existence. But the God of Christianity—"our Father in heaven"—is more than a "principle," and more than "unity." He is the *living* God—a Spirit self-conscious and personal, the Unifier, rather than the unity, of existence. No exposition of Christianity can be satisfactory that does not insist on this, or that sets itself to explain it away. In the next place, the Godhead or Divinity of Christ cannot be, and is not, fittingly presented on the principles of Neo-Hegelianism. To view Christ simply as the highest and best man is far from exhausting the Scripture conception. And, lastly, the Christian can hardly be satisfied with an analysis of the faith that omits, and obviously rejects, some of its essential doctrines—such as that of the Trinity.

2. Principal John Caird is exceptional among Gifford Lecturers in this respect, that, under the Gifford Trust, he delivered discourses on pure theology restricted to specifically Christian dogma. This, at the time, seemed to many to be an

innovation that required justification ; for it was not obvious that such procedure was compatible with Lord Gifford's intentions regarding Natural Theology as expressed in his Deed of Foundation. Accordingly, Principal Caird is careful, at the beginning of his lectures, to justify his position. He denies the ultimate validity of the distinction between Natural and Revealed Religion, and maintains, at a high philosophical height, that Christianity as a religion with a distinct dogmatic theology, is as much amenable to Reason as any other systematic religion, and, therefore, is no more removed from rational investigation and the test of thought than any other religion that is unhesitatingly regarded by Gifford Lecturers as within their scope. With this I readily agree: faith and reason must not be conceived as absolute opposites, nor must the one be so exalted that the other is only thereby degraded. But, at any rate, in his two volumes of Gifford Lectures on *The Fundamental Ideas of Christianity*, delivered before the University of Glasgow in Sessions 1892-93 and 1895-96, and published in 1899, we have a reasoned and powerful exposition of such Christian doctrines and ideas as the Christian conception of God, the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Future Life, taken from the side of modified Hegelian philosophy, and enforced by the measured and

impressive rhetoric that characterized Principal Caird's *Sermons* and that gave an irresistible charm to his Croall Lectures on *Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*. They are sure to be found an aid by the earnest student, whether he fully agree with the semi-Hegelian standpoint or not: they are indisputably, at many points, "words of the wise" serving "as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies."¹

3. Professor Henry Melville Gwatkin's Edinburgh lectures on *The Knowledge of God, and its Historical Development*, published in two volumes in 1906, are characterized by this, that, unlike most Gifford Lectures, they raise explicitly the important question of the possibility of a Divine revelation, and they deal with the probable methods of it, and, having established this, proceed in winged words to trace the development of Divine revelation through the Old and New Testaments, through the early Christian Church, onwards to the Reformation, and thence to modern thought, concluding with a forecast of the future of religion. The theme is handled with power and insight, and is marked by a sincerity of conviction that makes the subject live, and thereby draws the reader away from a mere abstract discussion into a helpful luminous exposition of religious belief that does

¹ *Ecclesiastes*, xii. 11.

not lose sight of the needs of the time, and the demands of religion on the individual in practical life.

4. Professor Otto Pfleiderer's Gifford Lectures on *Philosophy and Development of Religion*, delivered at Edinburgh in 1894, and published in two volumes, cover a large part of the ground traversed by Edward Caird in his St. Andrews lectures; but the handling of the theme is considerably different, as it behoved to be in the case of a distinguished German theologian so intimately conversant with the history, as well as with the philosophy, of religion as Professor Pfleiderer. Vol. i. deals specially with the philosophy of religion, and, following Kant, places the rational origin of man's belief in God in the necessity of conceiving the Divine Being as the Unity of the True and the Good (the two highest ideas of the theoretical and the practical reason respectively), for, "if reason is not to lose its unity, and therefore itself, in this antagonism between knowing of the real and demanding of the ideal [between objective knowledge and the authority of conscience], it must raise itself above the opposition to the synthesis of the two sides, or to the idea of God."¹ This position is worked out fully and with much logical power in vol. i.; where, not only is expounded the

¹ *Philosophy and Development of Religion*, vol. i. p. 103.

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revelation of God (*a*) in the natural order of the world, and (*b*) in its moral and religious order, but where also we find a sustained philosophical presentation (*a*) of the religious view of Man, and (*b*) of the religious view of the world—in the former of which we encounter the problems of “Man’s essential nature and his Activity,” and of “Redemption and Education,” and, in the latter, “Idealism” and “Naturalism” and “Optimism and Pessimism.” Vol. ii. is devoted to an exposition, interpretation, and historical account of the rise and development of Christianity, down to “the Christianity of Luther and of Protestantism,” constituting a notable contribution (exposed at many points to the criticism of orthodoxy) to the critical, interpretative, and historical treatment of the great subject by a bold, liberal-minded thinker, whose *Religionsphilosophie* had already put students in Great Britain under a distinct obligation.

5. Of the bulky posthumous volume entitled *Lectures and Essays on Natural Theology and Ethics*, by William Wallace, edited by Edward Caird, only the first of three large sections embodies the available material that constituted Professor Wallace’s Gifford Lectures, delivered at Glasgow University in two courses in 1894 and 1895. The other two sections of the volume are

a collection of striking "Essays in Moral Philosophy" and "Critical Essays" respectively. The subject of the Gifford Lectures for the first course was Natural Theology, and that for the second course the Relation of Religion to Morality; but, unfortunately, the tragic end to Professor Wallace's life through a bicycle accident prevented his rewriting or revising the lectures and giving them the finished form that revision would have effected. Notwithstanding, even in their fragmentary form, they afford a real insight into the lecturer's deepest thought and impress us with his integrity of character and his strength of conviction. Of the first course only three lectures are preserved, and of these the lecture on "The Natural Theology of Christ" is specially noteworthy, inasmuch as it brings out with the greatest clearness the meaning of the uniqueness of Christ, viewed from the standpoint of one who, while owing much to Hegel, owed more to his own distinctively religious nature and his power of apprehending and expounding principles and truths as embodied in living concrete instances. Of the second course nine lectures are published which may fittingly be summarized in the words of the Editor: "The first five lectures were occupied with a review of the various influences, ethical, literary, and scientific, which are affecting

the religious thought of the present time, and changing the old dogmatic conceptions with which religion was formerly associated. Of this part of the course only two lectures are preserved (the fourth and fifth of the lectures following). The MS. breaks off abruptly at the end of the second of these lectures, at the point where Mr. Wallace entered upon an examination of the influence of modern scientific conceptions upon the religious idea. The rest of the lectures of this course, from the sixth to the twelfth lecture, are preserved: they begin with an account and criticism of Mr. Balfour's *Foundations of Belief*, and then proceed to discuss the general subject of the relations of morality and religion. These lectures, though they have not been in any way revised or corrected since they were first written, seem to me to contain some of the most original and suggestive pages which Professor Wallace has produced."¹

6. Principal A. M. Fairbairn was the second of the Gifford Lecturers at Aberdeen (1891-1893). He discoursed in his brilliant rhetorical way to large audiences on Religion in the light of philosophy and reason. His Gifford Lectures have not been published as such; but I have little doubt that a portion of the material

¹ *Lectures and Essays*, pp. 3 and 4.

used in them may be found in his book on *The Philosophy of the Christian Religion*, published in 1902.

II. *Religious Philosophy among Ancient Peoples*

1. Professor A. H. Sayce's lectures on *The Religions of Ancient Egypt and Babylonia*, delivered in Aberdeen in 1901 and 1902, and published in a single volume in 1902, are the product of the untiring exploration and scholarship with which the name of Professor Sayce is associated. They traverse a wide area—the first course being devoted to the Ancient Egyptian, and the second to the Ancient Babylonian conception of the Divine; and they throw light on many religious views and notions of the distant past that have perennial interest for the student of comparative religion. The connexion of ancient Egypt and Babylonia with the early stages of the Jewish faith also makes them specially valuable for the student of Christianity. They are characterized not only by the opulence of the facts and information imparted, but also by the suggestiveness of the author's own interpretations. Theories like his, calmly stated and free from exaggeration, always appeal to the thoughtful. One instance only need be given—his view of the Egyptian origin of the doctrine of the

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Trinity. "You cannot but have been struck," he says, at the close of the first course of lectures, "by the similarity of the ancient Egyptian theory of the spiritual part of man to that which underlies so much Christian speculation on the subject, and which still pervades the popular theology of to-day." There is the same distinction between soul and spirit, the same belief in the resurrection of a material body, and in a heaven which is but a glorified counterpart of our own earth. Perhaps, however, the indebtedness of Christian theological theory to ancient Egyptian dogma is nowhere more striking than in the doctrine of the Trinity. The very terms used of it by Christian theologians meet us again in the inscriptions and papyri of Egypt. . . . Originally the trinity was a triad like those we find in Babylonian mythology. . . . The triad consisted of a divine father, wife, and son. It was thus a counterpart of the human family, and belonged to the same order of ideas as that which explained the creation of the world by a process of generation. This was the cosmology of Heliopolis, and it is probable that to Heliopolis also we must ascribe the doctrine of the Trinity. At any rate the doctrine seems to have been solar in its origin. As Tum, the god of sunset, was identical with Khepera, the sun of the morning, and Ra, the sun of the noonday—all three being but one god under

diverse forms—so the divine father was believed to engender himself in the person of the divine son, and the divine mother to be one with the divine father and son. The divine essence remained necessarily the same, whatever might be the forms or names under which it displayed itself; and the name, it must be remembered, had for the Egyptian, a separate and real existence. The Egyptian trinity has thus grown out of the triad under the influence of the solar theology, and of the old conception of a personality which possessed a concrete form. Once introduced into the Osirian creed, it spread with it throughout Egypt, and became a distinguishing feature of Egyptian theology. Along with the doctrines of the resurrection of the body and of a judgment to come, it passed into the schools of Alexandria, and was there thrown into the crucible of Greek philosophy. The platonic doctrine of ideas was adapted to the Egyptian doctrine of personality, and the three persons of the trinity became (for Neoplatonism) Unity, Mind, and Soul—absolute thought, absolute reason, and absolute energy.”¹

2. The subject of Greek Philosophical Religion has been handled in a striking manner by a distinguished group of Gifford Lecturers—James

¹ *The Religions of Ancient Egypt and Babylonia*, pp. 230-33.

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Adam, Edward Caird, Lewis Campbell, and Dean Inge.

(1) It would be difficult to find a more scholarly, a more illuminating, or a more stimulating presentation of the religious character of Greek thought than that which Dr. James Adam has given in his Gifford Lectures on the *Religious Teachers of Greece*, delivered before the University of Aberdeen, in 1904, 1905, and 1906, and published in one volume in 1908. The whole range of Greek poetry is covered from Homer to Euripides; the leading pre-Socratic philosophers and the Sophists are expounded with a clearness and force that make them and their doctrine live to-day; and the burning enthusiasm of Adam's nature is brought to bear on the delineation of Plato and his teaching, so that the reader is made to realize what it is to be held in the grasp of an ardent and convinced Platonist. No better handling of the subject need be looked for or desired than what we find here; and the subject is a great one, the value of which can be justly estimated only when we remember that Western civilization is largely based on Greek thought, and that Christian theology owes a lasting debt to Platonic teaching, mainly through St. Augustine.

(2) Edward Caird's Gifford Lectures at Glasgow (Sessions 1900-1 and 1901-2, published in two

volumes in 1904), on the *Evolution of Theology in the Greek Philosophers*, cover a section of the ground traversed by James Adam, but from a distinctly different standpoint, and without Adam's Platonic glow, and (it appears to me) with less sympathetic insight. They do not go back in any detail to the pre-Socratics, nor do they include the Greek poets; but, on the other hand, they come farther down in time, and treat of Aristotle, of the Stoics and the Epicureans, of the Neo-platonists, especially in the teaching of the most eminent representative of Neo-platonism, Plotinus. The lectures have many striking characteristics, and, in particular, they bring ancient Greek philosophy into direct living contact with modern systems of thought (as may be seen, for instance, in the thirteenth lecture, on the stirring question, "Does the Primacy belong to Reason or to Will?"); but the interpretation of the thinkers passed in review is frequently not beyond dispute, and I cannot help feeling that too much of the lecturer's own philosophical belief is read into those systems of the past. For all that, the lectures occupy a distinct place in the handling of the subject, and throw fresh light on many questions.

(3) Professor Lewis Campbell's volume of St. Andrews Gifford Lectures, published in 1898, on *Religion in Greek Literature*, makes an excellent

companion treatise to those of James Adam and Edward Caird. Although treading in part the same ground, it both supplements and complements them; and, treating the subject from the literary point of view and with fine literary touch, impresses us afresh with the undying debt that Christianity itself and modern civilization owe to Hellenic literature and culture, and enables us to realize vividly that "Greece was from first to last, beginning with the fathers of Epic poetry, the home of spiritual freedom."¹

(4) The study of Neo-Platonism has again significantly come to the front. I have just mentioned that it occupies an important section of Edward Caird's book on *The Evolution of Theology in the Greek Philosophers*. It has been pursued with great energy and singular success by Mr. Thomas Whittaker;² but nothing more notable has been written on it than Dean Inge's recent Gifford Lectures on *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, delivered before the University of St. Andrews in 1917-18, and published in two volumes in 1918, which bid fair to be for long our leading authority on the subject. It is not only a thorough study of the greatest of the Neo-platonists that we have here, but also a clear and full exposition of the Neo-

¹ *Religion in Greek Literature*, p. 12.

² See his *Neo-Platonism*, especially in the second edition.

Platonic system, written from a sympathetic standpoint and in due consciousness of the importance of such a scheme of thinking (covering all the realms of God, the Universe, and Man) for earnest seekers after truth at the present day. While not insensible to the merits of Professor Caird's exposition, Dean Inge's exposition differs from it in many respects; and, indeed, Dean Inge is frank enough to say:¹ "I wish that I could speak with a more whole-hearted appreciation of Dr. Edward Caird's chapters on our subject in the Gifford Lectures, entitled *Theology in the Greek Philosophers*, delivered at Glasgow in 1900-2. The book as a whole is as instructive as it is delightful, and it is no light matter to differ from one of the master-minds of his generation. But I must take my courage in both hands, and say that he seems to me to have attempted to stretch Plotinus on his Hegelian bed of Procrustes, and to have grievously distorted him in the process. . . . I cannot resist the conclusion that Dr. Caird has in some important respects entirely misrepresented the doctrine of the great Neo-platonist."

The lectures will be found of the utmost value by the scholar, but they will also prove a sure guide to the man of ordinary cultured intelligence. They are not an account of Neo-platonic philo-

¹ *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, vol. i. pp. 19, 20.

sophy from the outside, with the unsympathetic criticisms so easily made by the clever man who has not got inside the system, much less penetrated to its centre, but a really balanced exposition and estimate by one who has come under its influence, yet is not oblivious to the Neo-platonic limitations. Hence, Dean Inge's criticisms are of value, as well as his appreciations. His sympathetic spirit gives us full assurance of his competence: "I have admitted throughout these lectures I have studied Plotinus as a disciple, though not an uncritical one. I hold that this is the right attitude towards a great thinker; and if an ancient philosopher is not a great thinker, I do not think it is worth while to spend several years in studying him. I should not care to write a book about a philosopher whose system seemed to me entirely out of date, or vitiated by fundamental errors. . . . A great writer has a message for other times as well as for his own. . . . I have tried throughout to deal with Neo-platonism as a living and not as a dead philosophy, and to consider what value it has for us in the twentieth century."¹

3. Dr. W. Warde Fowler's Gifford Lectures for 1909-10 on *The Religious Experience of the Roman People*, delivered in Edinburgh University, make an admirable supplement to the various Gifford

¹ *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, vol. ii. p. 219.

courses on Greek thought and Greek religion. The classical circle is thereby widened, if not completed ; and while a new set of ideas is presented to us in the earlier part of the lectures, it is noteworthy that the latest phases of Roman religious thought were brought about by the introduction of Greek philosophy, and Stoicism in special, into Rome (for the lectures bring down the subject to the age of Augustus), so that Greek is markedly influential even here. In the scholarly handling of his theme Dr. Fowler is quite aware that his solution of difficult points, especially in the interpretation of certain religious terms and rites, is open to question ; but he knows, further, as he himself (quoting another) had said regarding his own intellectual disputes with others, that " difference of opinion is the salt of life." The subject of Roman religion is not only arresting in itself, but also arouses our interest, for the reason that the investigation of it impresses on us the fact that to Rome, no less than to Greece, the development of Christianity owes a considerable debt. In this case, the debt includes particularly ritual and the practical character of religion (for religion among the Romans was essentially practical), but also the important contribution of religious vocabulary (for example—*religio*, *pietas*, *sacramentum*)—a highly important contribution, as every one will allow.

C.—PHILOSOPHY AND ULTIMATE REALITY

Of the higher metaphysics the Gifford Lectures are full. But certain writers may be grouped together as being more distinctively metaphysical.

1. The first I shall mention is Professor James Ward, whose Gifford Lectures at Aberdeen University, delivered in the years 1896-98, on *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, are a very notable contribution to philosophy. They are closely reasoned from beginning to end, and reach their conclusion, of the need of a spiritual Monism as the explanatory principle of the universe, through a keen and elaborate criticism of opposing theories—mechanical, evolution, psycho-physical parallelism—and a refutation of dualism. It is enough to say regarding them that, in philosophical circles, they are acknowledged as a standard work, with permanent value; that, in many universities, they are an accepted text-book for the higher studies; and that they are practically indispensable for every one who would study deeply and hope to master the intellectual problems of to-day.

2. Professor Josiah Royce of Harvard was the immediate successor of Dr. Ward in the Gifford Chair in Aberdeen, and delivered his lectures on

The World and the Individual in 1899 and 1900 and published them in two volumes in 1900 and 1901. These lectures are of no less outstanding merit than those of Dr. Ward, but they differ in the point of view, the adroitness of mental movement, and in the fluency of the style. The first volume treats of Theory of Being—the various conceptions of Being (Realism, Mysticism, Critical Rationalism, and Absolutism), and expounds in especial the author's idealistic view of the Absolute. The detailed application of the first principles here enunciated to problems that directly concern religion is the main object of vol. ii. The second volume is summarized by the author himself thus: "The scope of this closing volume includes a sketch of an idealistic Theory of Human Knowledge, an outline of a Philosophy of Nature, a doctrine about the self, a discussion of the origin and destiny of the Human Individual, a summary consideration of the world as a Moral Order, a study of the Problem of Evil, and, finally, an estimate of all these views in the light of what seem to me to be the interests of Natural Religion."¹ This is a vast programme, and it has been carried out in a brilliant manner, riveting the attention at every turn. The central point in the Theory of Being is Self, and Self to our author "is Meaning"—

¹ *The World and the Individual*, vol. ii. "Preface," p. vi.

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expressed purpose, aiming at the Ideal. A Self is not a thing, or a Soul, or a Substance, but "a Meaning embodied in a conscious life."¹ In like manner, the World is declared to "exist, in its wholeness and in every fragment and aspect of its life, as the positive embodiment of conscious will and purpose."² And of God, as the Absolute, it is maintained that he is personal and conscious, and not mere abstract Unity: "Simple unity is a mere impossibility. God cannot be One except by being Many. Nor can we various Selves be Many, unless in Him we are One. To know just this is to win the deepest truth that religion has been seeking to teach humanity."³ All this is striking and impressive, but to many it will seem (and the lectures themselves in general will seem) rather elusive. In particular, Self regarded as a "Meaning" is not adequate to the experienced fact. For "meaning" has signification only in relation to a Subject who means or intends. It is this subject that is the Self—that means or purposes or intends, that conceives and aims at the fulfilment of the Ideal. So too the term "God" is, in Royce's hands, elusive. It does not express the theist's conception of God after all; for "God, for our view," he says, "is not an external cause

¹ *The World and the Individual*, vol. ii. "Preface," p. vi.

² *Id.* vol. ii. p. 329.

³ *Id.* vol. ii. p. 331.

of the world, but is the very existence of the world in its wholeness as the fulfilment of purpose.”¹

3. Lord Haldane's Gifford Lectures, delivered before the University of St. Andrews in Sessions 1902-3 and 1903-4, and published in two volumes, are entitled *The Pathway to Reality*. They consist in a lengthened consideration, from the Hegelian point of view, of the meaning and notion of Reality, including criticism of the categories of Science and of Psychology; and, as they set forth Mind as the ultimate Reality, they are occupied, among other things, with Art and Religion as revealers of the ultimately Real. The substance of the discussion is stated thus, near the close of the lectures:—"We have found, as the result of our journey of discovery, that the pathway to reality leads us to look at the nature of what is ultimate as mind completely comprehending itself, and that finite mind is the same mind in imperfect forms of self-comprehension, self-determinations on the part of the Absolute Mind that are but phases of the activity in which it creates and gathers up the full riches of its concrete self-comprehension." ² While Hegel is to Lord Haldane the supreme

¹ *The World and the Individual*, vol. ii. p. 330.

² *The Pathway of Reality*, vol. ii. pp. 255-256.

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philosophical authority among moderns, the great name of Goethe is also one with which he conjures; thereby indicating to us the high value that he puts on the function and place of the true poet as an interpreter of life and of the universe.

4. M. Emile Boutroux was Gifford Lecturer in Glasgow University in 1904 and 1905, when he lectured in French on *La Nature et L'Esprit*, delivering his first course on "Nature" and his second on "Spirit." It does not appear that the lectures have ever been published in their original form, but a portion of the matter of them is clearly embodied in his *Science et Religion dans la philosophie contemporaine*, published in French in 1908, and in English in 1909. In the first part of the lectures, he canvassed in a very interesting fashion Positivism, the Scientific Method, the Mathematical Sciences, the Physical Sciences, Biology, Psychology, and Sociology. This was very natural in a thinker coming from the land of Auguste Comte; and he pursued the same plan in the second part, when he traversed Logic, Metaphysics, Art, the Cult of the Beautiful, Morality, Religion, and Religious Beliefs. If it be so, as I surmise, that the thought of the lectures is in measure embodied in the published volume on *Science and Religion in Contemporary Philosophy*,

it may be interesting to note the contents of that volume. It consists of two parts. Part I. is occupied with the "Naturalistic Tendency," and is concerned with consideration of Auguste Comte and the Religion of Humanity, Herbert Spencer and the Unknowable, Haeckel and Monism, Psychology, and Sociology; and Part II. is on "the Spiritualist Tendency," and is devoted to examination of Ritschl and radical dualism, Religion and the limits of Science, the Philosophy of Action (Pragmatism, etc.), and William James and Religious Experience.

5. M. Boutroux's immediate successor in the Gifford Chair in Glasgow was Professor A. C. Bradley, appointed in 1906. I understand that he delivered a course of lectures on "Theology in the Poets," which doubtless would prove a fascinating subject in his hands; but I cannot find that the lectures have been published.

6. Professor Bosanquet's Gifford Lectures, delivered at Edinburgh in 1911 and 1912, and published in two volumes entitled respectively *The Principle of Individuality and Value* and *Value and Destiny of the Individual* are pronouncedly Hegelian and have led to much discussion. Their central position, however, has already come before us in Lecture VI., and need not be further adverted to here.

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7. *The Interpretation of Religious Experience* is the title of Professor J. Watson's Gifford Lectures, delivered in the University of Glasgow in the year 1910-12, and published in two volumes in 1912. The first volume, or "Part First," is purely *Historical*, designed to trace the influence of philosophy on the evolution of Christianity, and deals with the development of Greek religion and philosophy, of Hebrew religion, and of the religion of Jesus; thence onwards to the development of Christian theology from Origen to Aquinas, in Dante, in Eckart; thence to the philosophies of Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz, of Locke and the English Deists, of Berkeley and Hume, of Kant and of Hegel. This is regarded as the suitable introduction to vol. ii., or "Part Second," which is *Constructive*, but which reaches its conclusion by copious criticism of opposing views—such as Radical Empiricism, Naturalism and Evolution, Bergson's Theory of Creative Evolution, Personal and Absolute Idealism, Hypothetical Theism, Schopenhauer's "Will to Live," and Nietzsche's "Over-man." The conclusion reached is, that no dualistic or pluralistic conception of the world of whatever form can be regarded as a satisfactory solution of the world-problem. An adequate synthesis means a Spiritual Monism; or, in other words, the pre-

supposition necessary to the possibility of knowledge (both to the possibility of knowledge getting a beginning and to the possibility of its development) is the rationality and intelligibility of the universe. "The conclusion therefore of our whole investigation is," he says, "that man as a spiritual or self-conscious being is capable of experiencing God, who is the absolutely spiritual or self-conscious being, and that the influence of God upon man is not external or mechanical, but spiritual, and, so far from being destructive of freedom, is the condition without which freedom is inconceivable."¹ The lectures end with an interesting chapter on "The Invisible Church and Immortality"; in which the former is set forth, in a wide sense, as "the spirit of goodness in all forms of social organization"—the "spirit that works in humanity as a whole,"² and not merely in one ecclesiastical institution (*e.g.*, the Church as conceived by Cardinal Newman), and the latter (Immortality) is based in the need of eternity for the full realization of the unrealized possibilities of knowledge, art, and morality here, and, "as the ideal of social organization is the participation of every individual in the highest results of social

¹ *The Interpretation of Religious Experience*, vol. ii. p. 326.

² *Id.* vol. ii. p. 304.

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progress, the argument from the unrealized possibilities must be regarded as tending to establish personal and not merely corporate immortality.”¹

The vast amount of close reasoning that the lectures contain, and the expanse of the field surveyed, render them imposing; and, although it is not always easy to give adherence to the positions maintained (especially in cases where the influence of Hegel is strong), there can be no question of their power to stimulate thought and to elucidate the subject treated of.

8. Professor S. Alexander's Gifford Lectures, on *Space, Time, and Deity*, delivered at Glasgow in Sessions 1916-17 and 1917-18, have not yet been published. From the printed abstract of them, given at the time of delivery, it is obvious that they were a very strenuous metaphysical effort, altogether out of the usual, but it is not possible from the mere abstract to understand exactly how Space and Time and the complex developments of them stand related to the Deity, nor is it possible to pronounce with any kind of assurance on the value of the strange but striking views enunciated. We must await the full publication. The need for suspense of judgment may be seen from this brief extract from the

¹ *The Interpretation of Religious Experience*, vol. ii. p. 313.

synopsis of the last lecture of the second course:—"God's deity is the outcome of a process in which we are participants, our efforts in part determine what His deity shall be, and we matter to Him as He matters to us. But God's deity is an empirical character as much as consciousness or life, and is lodged in only a portion of the universe, though an infinite portion. Hence God is in no sense timeless or out of Space. Nor is He in the strict sense a creator of the universe. God's body is the universe itself, and *is* creative since all things arise within it through the operation of time. But God is the universe as possessing deity; and deity, which is His distinctive character, is itself created and the outcome of Time. His deity is the realisation of the 'prophetic soul' of the world."

9. In the summer of 1919, Professor G. F. Stout delivered the first course of his Gifford Lectures at Edinburgh under the title of "Mind and Matter in Man and the Universe." His handling of the subject was purely philosophical, and consisted largely in a criticism of Materialism, and an exposition of the Unity of the Universe, and a polemic with Mr. Bertrand Russell. If one may judge by the brief abstract of his lectures that the author issued, there

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ought to be here an acceptable contribution to the philosophical treatment of the great theme propounded.

D.—PHILOSOPHY AND THEISM

I. *With Theism as general Theme*

1. The first Gifford Lecturer in Edinburgh was Dr. James Hutchison Stirling—whose very name one can hardly write without a feeling of veneration and regard. While the first Gifford lecturers at the other three Scottish Universities turned for a subject to Anthropology, Dr. Stirling started off direct with Natural Theology. His lectures on *Philosophy and Theology* (delivered in 1888–90, and published in a single volume) are a thorough and elaborate handling of the various Theistic “proofs,” remarkable for the wide knowledge and the keen dialectic of the lecturer, and proving a storehouse of learning for the student of the history of Theism. The lectures on “Darwin and Design” are specially noteworthy; but the whole constitutes a lasting tribute both to the head and to the heart of the redoubtable philosopher whose work on *The Secret of Hegel* was the first to give insight into the deep things of Hegelian philosophy to the British student in the sixties of last century.

2. Sir G. G. Stokes's volume of Gifford Lectures on *Natural Theology*, delivered before the University of Edinburgh in 1891, is after the older type of theistic reasoning and is occupied with many of the ordinary questions regarding the being and the nature of God, handled with much simplicity of nature, and having a special bearing on the theistic argument from design and the compatibility of science with revelation. The religious, and even devout, spirit that pervades them is specially noteworthy, when we remember that Sir George Gabriel Stokes was one of the most illustrious men of science of his time, and the science of his time leant largely towards agnosticism.

3. Three of the most important philosophical writings (under the Gifford Trust) having a special value for the theist are those of A. Campbell Fraser, Mr. Arthur Balfour, and Professor Pringle-Pattison, but, as I have handled each of them in a separate lecture, no further reference to them is necessary. I pass, therefore, to Professor Laurie.

4. Simon S. Laurie's two volumes of *Synthetica : being Meditations Epistemological and Ontological* are a real contribution to the philosophy of Theism ; but the second only embodies his Gifford Lectures at Edinburgh, delivered in the years 1905 and 1906. Vol. I. is devoted to Theory of

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Knowledge, and contains the author's matured thoughts, in the form of "Meditations," on the salient points connected with Subject and Object in man's conscious experience, and therefore with the nature, analysis, and significance of Self or Ego. It is the fitting ground-work and introduction of Vol. II. (the Gifford Lectures proper), which is mainly Ontological, dealing with God and man, and which unfolds gradually the lecturer's Theistic positions, under Hegelian influence (still in the form of "Meditations"), with much clearness and distinctness of expression, but with a certain strain laid upon the reader on account of a technical vocabulary with which he may not be familiar. In this second volume the Theism is unhesitating, resting on the sound principle that, as man's whole nature is involved in the quest for God, it must be met in its entirety in the solution; and the strength of the writer's own convictions, as he grapples with the problems valiantly, lends an additional force to the presentation—which, on its philosophical side, has a distinct and independent value.

II. *Special Aspects of Theism*

1. Theism, chiefly taken from the side of man's moral nature, is the characteristic of Professor James Ward's St. Andrews Gifford Lectures, on

The Realm of Ends ; or Pluralism and Theism, delivered in the years 1907-10 and published in a single volume in 1911. They are the fitting supplement to his previous Gifford Lectures at Aberdeen, on *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, which now, he thinks, might suitably be re-named *The Realm of Nature ; or Naturalism and Spiritualism*.¹ "There," as he himself puts it, in his "Preface" to the present volume, "my endeavour was to establish the priority of the idealistic, or—as it seems clearer to say—the spiritualistic standpoint ; and here I have tried to ascertain what we can know, or reasonably believe, concerning the constitution of the world *interpreted throughout and strictly in terms of Mind*." His position is that, starting with Pluralism, we are driven on by the impulsion of logic to Theism. Hence Pluralism is the subject of the first part of these lectures, and Theism the subject of the second. In the second part are raised and discussed the great metaphysical questions of Creation, Pampsychism and Occasionalism, Freedom and Foreknowledge ; and the equally important and significant ethical questions of Evil, Optimism, and Pessimism, Moral Evil and Moral Order, and a Future Life. As the upshot of all, important positive results are reached

¹ "Preface" to the fourth (or single volumed) edition of this work.

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regarding God and the world, regarding the relation of the Supreme Mind to finite minds, and regarding the unseen. The concluding words are inspiring:—"The world is God's self-limitation, self-renunciation might we venture to say? And so God is love. And what must that world be that is worthy of such love? The only worthy object of love is just love: it must then be a world that can love God. But love is free: in a ready-made world then it could have no place. Only as we learn to know God do we learn to love him: hence the long and painful discipline of evolution, with *its* dying to live—the converse process to incarnation—the putting off the earthly for the likeness of God. In such a realm of ends we trust 'that God is love indeed, and love creation's final law.' We cannot live or move without faith, that is clear. Is it not then rational to believe in the best, we ask; and can there be a better?"¹

2. Ethical Theism is also specifically Professor W. R. Sorley's theme in his Gifford Lectures on *Moral Values and the Idea of God*, delivered in the University of Aberdeen in 1914 and 1915, and published in one volume in 1918. The basis of his theistic argument is moral values or the nature of the ethical ideal. It is his contention that morality and our moral experience, although not the

¹ *The Realm of Ends*, p. 453.

sole key to the interpretation of the world, have a potency and significance all their own. They are concerned with value; and value, not less than natural law, or physical order, has objective validity. To the proof of this a large part (the earlier part) of the volume is devoted. Such headings of lectures as "Values," "The Meaning of Value," "The Criteria of Moral Value," "Value and Personality," "The Conservation of Value," "Value and Reality" will give some idea of the fulness and diversity of the handling. At every turn it becomes clearer that ultimate reality, whatever more it may be, is of an ethical nature. As the argument proceeds, objections also are met; and two points, in particular, come out of great importance for the understanding of the argument—namely, that the possibility of such abstract terms as goodness, justice, veracity having a meaning is dependent on the fact that the qualities for which they stand should be realized in some person or some concrete situation; and the further circumstance that relativity obtains in the case of ethical experience, as in the case of knowledge, without thereby in any way invalidating the objectivity of Morality.

But, granted the objectivity of moral values, the question arises, How can the realm of ethics be harmonized with that of outward nature? for

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Nature is dominated by causation and uniformity, and ethics is restricted to persons and implies liberty of choice or volitional freedom, real initiative or creative power. The two worlds would seem to be contradictory of each other. Yet physical order and causal connexion, although they take no direct cognizance of moral freedom, are not incompatible with it; as may be seen in the fact that the moral man, a free agent and a unique centre of consciousness, has to acquire habits and form a character which give stability to his nature and such an amount of uniformity to his actions that we can, in ordinary circumstances, predict how he will act or counsel. Hence, it is through the idea of *purpose* that the reconciliation of the two worlds is effected. Nature is not a closed system, nor is morality. Evolution is proceeding, and progress is the law. The medium of the progress for human beings is Nature. The very pains and sufferings that arise to us in our intercourse with Nature, the hardships and misery of life, are but the means of training moral heroes; and a world in which moral heroes are possible—being endowed with free will, bending untoward circumstances to their ends and voluntarily rising to great things—is a grander world than would be that in which all should go softly and smoothly with us and no difficulties had

to be encountered or obstacles surmounted. Thus, Nature with its causal connexions is subordinate to ethical value, and is interpretable in connexion therewith. It too has value, but it is instrumental and not intrinsic.

But moral values, as they imply the ethical ideal as a criterion or standard, and therefore are never fully realized by finite spiritual beings like men, imply the actual embodiment of the Ideal somewhere. This can only be in the Highest. Thus, ultimately, the interpretation of the world is seen to involve a theistic ground. "If the moral order is not altogether sundered from the natural order, if the universe is really a universe and not a multiverse, then we must hold that the moral order is the order of that one mind whose purpose nature and man are slowly fulfilling. Here, therefore, we have a key to the theistic interpretation of the world. The moral order expresses the divine nature; and things partake of this nature in so far as they conform to that order or manifest goodness."¹ This is impressively worked out in the later lectures—especially in those of them that treat of "The Moral Argument," "Monism," "Purpose," "Freedom," "Theism," and "The Idea of God." Especially weighty are the last of these, where the theistic conception is subjected to a

¹ *Moral Values and the Idea of God*, p. 466.

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very close examination, where difficulties are directly faced and their force mitigated when not entirely removed.

In these lectures we have a real contribution to the philosophy of Theism from the side of ethics; and through all the windings of the investigation the lecturer guides with a firm hand and adheres so rigorously to his theme as to produce an argument "strong in its solid singleness."

3. Professor A. B. Bruce's Gifford Lectures, at Glasgow, were delivered in 1897 and 1898, and published in two separate volumes afterwards. The first volume is designated *The Providential Order of the World*, and is a singularly clear, untechnical, and simply-expressed exposition of such topics as man's place in the universe, his worth and the worth of life; the power making for righteousness and working in and for humanity, and the various Providential methods of Election, Solidarity, and progress by Sacrifice. Many serious problems are opened up here, and the lecturer's sanity of judgment and sympathetic attitude towards scientific conceptions, such as Evolution, makes his writing particularly interesting and suggestive. The same applies to the second volume on *The Moral Order of the World*; the title being intended to bring out the circumstance that, although the moral order is involved

in the Providential Order, nevertheless it may be viewed impersonally, and so does not necessarily involve the existence of a *personal* Deity. The treatment here is mainly historical, dealing with such moral and religious systems as those of Buddha, Zoroaster, the Greek Tragedians, the Stoics, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the Hebrews (represented chiefly by the prophets and the Book of Job), passing on thence to Christ's teaching concerning Providence; and, finally, to the modern Optimism of Browning and to Modern Dualism (*a*) in its scientific and philosophical aspects, and (*b*) in its religious and social aspects. The lectures from beginning to end are perhaps more than any of the other Gifford Lectures "popular" (in the best sense of the term) and directly fulfil one of Lord Gifford's requirements which has been too often ignored—"his wish," namely (to quote Dr. Bruce's own words), "that the discussions carried on under the foundation should be of a generally useful character; not merely academic, in respect of the audience in view and the mode of treatment, but 'popular,' aiming, that is, at the benefit of the many, and handling topics in a manner level with the comprehension of men who bring to the study ordinary intelligence and an honest interest in religion."¹

¹ *The Providential Order of the World*, p. 2.

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4. The central point in Theism is Personality ; and yet Personality in relation to the Divine, all-important though it is, has not received the careful and thorough consideration from the Gifford Lecturers that is its due. This defect is in course of being rectified, for two of the most recent lecturers have taken Personality for their theme.

(1) M. Henri Bergson, as Gifford Lecturer at Edinburgh in 1914, discoursed in brilliant fashion on "the Problem of Personality"; but, unfortunately, his first course of lectures had only closed when the War broke out, and the lectures have not been resumed, nor is the first course published. His lectures constituted a very luminous and characteristic psychological analysis of human personality as it appears to consciousness in immediate and direct observation. Personality is in his view continuity of change: "A continual forward movement, gathering up the entire past and creating the future—such is the essential nature of the person. Its nature cannot be adequately expressed save in terms of change."¹ The Divine Personality, I have reason to believe, would have occupied his attention in the second course of lectures.

(2) The most elaborate and strenuous treatment of Personality is to be found in Mr. Clement C. J.

¹ *Printed Abstract of Lecture VII.*, p. 3.

Webb's Gifford Lectures on *God and Personality*, delivered in the University of Aberdeen in the years 1918 and 1919; the first course of which was published in 1918, and the second course still awaits publication.¹ It treats the subject in a variety of aspects—historically, from the side of psychology, and from the distinctively religious standpoint; only the purely metaphysical point of view is wanting.

In the first course, we are brought face to face, among other things, with the themes of personality and individuality and of individuality and rationality; and, again, with the doctrine of a finite God, and the problems of creation and sin. Particularly illuminative and acceptable is the discussion, in Lecture IX., of the relation of religion to philosophy, and the articulate insistence on the specific contribution made by religious experience to our conception of the Supreme Unity. This lecture is specially effective as being spoken from within the religious experience itself. The account of Divine Personality, also, and its importance in connexion with such religious ideas as Sin, Forgiveness, Justice, Sacrifice, and Union, in Lecture X. is very suggestive, and light is thrown upon the subject by a reference to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.

¹ It has just been published in 1920.

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In the light of the conclusions reached regarding the Divine Personality, Mr. Webb proceeded, in his second course of lectures, to consider Personality in relation to Man, and the problem of the value and destiny of finite individual persons. The topics discussed in turn were:—The Divine Personality and the economic life, the Divine Personality and the scientific life, the Divine Personality and the æsthetic life, the Divine Personality and the moral life, the Divine Personality and the political life, and the Divine Personality and the religious life. A truly wide area, illuminated at every point by lucid exposition and felicitous illustration drawn from a singularly well-stored mind. Nor does the Individual suffer at the lecturer's hands. His worth and his future being alike receive careful discussion. The only criticism to be made is, that the religious consciousness as a source of light regarding man's destiny is used too exclusively, thereby ignoring the place of the intellect in man's nature and the specific function of philosophy.

III. *Theism and Science*

Philosophers of the various schools are unanimous in holding, each on the grounds supplied by his own philosophy, that there is no antagonism between science and the higher thinking, and con-

sequently none between science and religion. To them it appears senseless to ask for a reconciliation of religion and science, and futile to attempt it: no reconciliation is required where there is no real antagonism. I need only refer to Professor Ward's *Realm of Ends*, or to Campbell Fraser's *Philosophy of Theism*. On the other hand, the philosophical theist has not been slow to see that the most recent advances in science, or in the interpretation of scientific facts (say by evolution), are a help to the deeper theistic thinking. Hence the special value to him of such lectures as those of Dr. Driesch on *The Science and Philosophy of the Organism*, and those of Professor Arthur Thomson on *A Study of Animate Nature*, dealing with the Realm of Organisms as it is and with the evolution of the Realm of Organisms.

CONCLUSION

Looking back on this abstract and presentation of the Gifford Lectures as published, from the beginning of the Series to the year 1919, we cannot fail to see how widely the notion of Natural Theology has been conceived by the lecturers. Lord Gifford's Will has been very liberally interpreted, and practically every region of experience that is open to observation, verification, and the inductive method—covering inorganic

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nature, living nature, and human nature—has been regarded as coming within its scope. The world of matter and the world of living beings, yielding the physical sciences and the science of life, have been rightly taken as germane to the founder's intention. So, too, has Man viewed as a self-conscious individual or person, and the disclosures regarding him made to us by psychology or mental science, by theory of knowledge, and by the higher metaphysics as ontology. So, too, have men looked at as social beings—the material of such sciences as sociology, economics, and ethnology; and, not least, human history interpreted from the standpoint of philosophy as the revealer of a plan or purpose in the record of the race—the manifestation of Mind all-pervasive and active throughout the ages, concerned with man's destiny in accordance with his nature as a free agent.

From the foregoing presentation it will be seen, further, how far we have travelled from the days of Paley in the theistic interpretation of the universe; or from the days of the Burnett Prize Essayists (Principal William Laurence Brown and Archbishop Sumner, the Reverend Robert Anchor Thompson and Principal John Tulloch); or from those of the Bridgewater Treatises. Nature is still teleologically interpreted by the philosopher,

but the teleology is no longer conceived as external and mechanical but as immanent in the universe and specially associated with man's ideals and aspirations and with the conception of value. It is specially associated also with the conception of the universe as an evolving process and of man too as in course of development and working out his destiny.

In casting the net thus wide, the Gifford Lecturers have been able to bring to view and set forth an extraordinary variety of the aspects of Truth, and to disclose the wonders of nature and of man with a clearness and fulness that could not be other than impressive. The speculations have often been bold, because they have been free and untrammelled, but always reverent and honest. On the face of it, no doubt, some of the lectures seem to be far removed from Natural Theology—the philosophy of the nature and attributes of God; for the subjects of discourse are either distinctly abstract and philosophical or pronouncedly scientific and technical, and the authors have not always felt the necessity of being explicit on the religious bearings or implications of their prelections. But, as "Truth is catholic and Nature one," it will be found upon reflection that nothing that is true can be alien to Natural Theology rationally conceived, and that every

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department of truth must point ultimately to the Highest Truth and elucidate it. The object of every lecturer has been, more or less consciously and in a wider or a narrower sphere, to find the unity in things and to set forth his thoughts as, at any rate, parts of a coherent system.

Hence we have "schools" of thinkers very markedly represented in the Gifford Lectures. The professional scientific men have not deemed it requisite to confine themselves to expositions of the merely commonplace of science, or even of the particular part of science with which they have dealt, but have struck out courses of their own—as Professor Driesch did in his biological lectures, and Mr. Andrew Lang in his lectures in anthropology. The historians and interpreters of the religious thoughts of distinct peoples (such as James Adam, Edward Caird, and Lewis Campbell, in connexion with the thinkers of Greece, or Professor Sayce in dealing with the ancient Egyptians and the Babylonians) have handled the doctrines passed in review in the light of their own personal religious reflections and convictions, thereby making these ancient systems to live and to disclose their present-day value. But, most of all, the diversity of "schools" is apparent among the professional philosophers. In the treatment of religion that concerns the general development of religious

thought, as, again, in the cases when philosophy concerns itself specially with the determination of ultimate reality, Neo-Hegelianism has been exceptionally prominent at several of the Universities—especially Glasgow. That was the form of Idealism that caught the imagination and secured the allegiance of many thinkers in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when the Gifford Lectures were instituted, and that seemed to them alone effective in meeting the naturalism and materialism of the time. Hence the lectures of the two brothers John and Edward Caird, of Professor Pfleiderer and Professor Tiele, and, in the present century, of Lord Haldane, of Mr. Bosanquet, of William Wallace, and of Professor Watson (each with his own doctrinal modifications). But Idealism, *stript of its specific Hegelianism*, has again come to its own, as may be seen by reference to the writings (say) of Professor Ward, of Professor Pringle-Pattison, and of Professor Sorley. In this we have thought more akin to the sane and common-sense Scottish philosophy of Thomas Reid, and affording (as I think) a more stable basis for enlightened Theism.

But those of the Gifford philosophers who are pronounced theists have this peculiarity, that they are fully alive to the necessity of basing Theism on a sound Theory of Knowledge; for neither

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theism nor systematic theology can be severed from the consideration and understanding of the Self and its operations. This is a point that is prominent in the lectures of Professor Pringle-Pattison, that has been insisted on from the side of ethics by Professor Sorley, and that is the dominating thought in Professor Ward's *The Realm of Ends*—a treatise that is explicitly stated to be complementary to that on *Naturalism and Agnosticism*. It also underlies Mr. C. C. J. Webb's treatment of Personality, and is strongly enforced by Professor Laurie in his *Synthetica*. In this way recent theistic reasoning has attained a special stability.

When we turn to the professional theologian, we find that his interests have been wide and noteworthy. His attention has been occupied by the *Science* of Religion, as in the case of Professor Tiele; or he has devoted himself to a consideration of the *philosophy* of religion, as with Professor Pfleiderer and Principal Fairbairn; or, yet again, the historical development of our knowledge of God has been his theme, as with Professor Gwatkin; or the study of a mystical philosophy of the past, as with Dean Inge.

Much as has been done by the Gifford Lecturers, the subject of Natural Theology is not yet exhausted. But can it ever be exhausted? Not,

certainly, so long as science, literature, art, and philosophy continue to push forward into view fresh realms of interest and make new discoveries and furnish clearer and deeper insight. Religion and theology can only be exhausted when they become stagnant, and that cannot be till the other interests of mankind cease to engage attention and to stimulate to reflection. All the elements of man's conscious being, and his interests, are mutually dependent and inter-related, and they will thrive and progress together. Our knowledge of God will grow with growing experience in all the spheres of human thought and human action. Every advance in science and in art, in poetry and romance, and in practical life has a bearing on religious conceptions and may throw light on Divine things; for Religion, being central and man's chief concern, must gather all human interests into itself and utilize them all. It has been shown by the Gifford Lecturers that Natural Theology is far from being an uninteresting and useless study, far from being rigid and sterile (as some have maintained), but is living, progressive, and expansive. It may also be reasonably doubted whether it is not indispensable to the full comprehension of the real nature of all the other studies, and holds the key to the ultimate interpretation of the revelations that each is capable of making. "In

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thy Light shall we see light," says Scripture.¹ And may not that very well be taken as the motto of every earnest student of Nature, as well as of the artist ardently pursuing Beauty, and of the philosopher untiringly in quest of Truth? Does not the Divine vision underlie all and illumine all?

¹ *Psalm xxxvi. 9.*

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